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ABSTRACT

This report contains the proceedings of the second Louisiana statewide conference on literacy, which spotlighted the national endeavors of literacy practitioners and providers, works, and programs. Based on participants' input from the first forum, special emphasis was placed on workplace and family literacy, public relations, and policy making. The following presentations are included: "Louisiana Literacy Forum II" (Michael Sartisky); "State of the State of Literacy in Louisiana" (Ben Brady); "Leaders and Literacy: The Challenge Met and Unmet" (Wilma Dykeman); "Nationwide Trends in Literacy" (Evelyn Ganzglass); "Think Literacy, Think Newspapers" (Mary Ann Gentile): "Literacy Efforts of the Newspaper Industry" (JoAnne Ellis); "Making It Happen: Implementing Learning Centered Education" (Eunice N. Askov); "Building State Literacy Systems" (Susan E. Foster); "Basic Skills Impediments to Communication between Management and Hourly Employees" (Larry Mikulecky); "Technological Challenges and Literacy Expectations" (Priscilla Norton); "But Is the Literacy Collection Being Used?" (Peggy Barber); "Keeping the Issue Alive" (Karen Hering); "Family Literacy: Its Past and Its Promise" (Meta Potts): "Grant Writing Tips for Successful Literacy Projects" (Carol Cameron Lyons); "Workplace Literacy Roundtable: Opening Remarks" (Buddy Roemer); "PLUS (Project Literacy United States)" (James Duffy); and "Heels over Head in Love with Language" (Richard Lederer). (KC)

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Proceedings of the LOUISIANA LITERACY FORUM II

Held March 12-13, 1991
New Orleans Airport Hilton and
Pontchartrain Center

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PREFACE

This second statewide conference on literacy furthered the momentum gained, not only through the first forum, but also through the efforts of the Louisiana Office of Literacy, the White House Conference on Libraries and Information Science, the Louisiana Coalition for Literacy, and other literacy groups in Louisiana. This two day forum, held in conjunction with the Louisiana Library Association annual conference, spotlighted the national endeavors of literacy practitioners and providers, works and programs.

Based on participants' input from the first forum, special emphasis was placed on workplace and family literacy, public relations, and policy making. These articles are simply texts or transcripts of presentations and should be viewed as working papers. Materials presented also included slides, charts, video, and handouts.

Louisiana Literacy Forum II was made possible through a grant from the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, with additional funding provided by the Louisiana Library Association, the Louisiana Office of Literacy, and corporate sponsors.

These conference proceedings continue to inform literacy advocates of the work that needs to be done to achieve a **literate Louisiana** by the year 2000.

The Editors

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LOUISIANA LITERACY FORUM II

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LOUISIANA LITERACY FORUM II

Dr. Michael Sartisky
Executive Director
Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities

You join us from far off states or the many parishes of Louisiana. It is with very real pleasure that I welcome you to the second Louisiana Literacy Forum. Your very presence is a sign of hope for the future literacy efforts of our staff and I sincerely thank you for joining us. On behalf of the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, I also want to especially thank Beth Bingham and Mary Stein and I hear now also Jane LeBlanc for the efforts they have made to make this effort possible. Beth and Ben and I were, in fact, the project co-directors of last year's first statewide conference and Beth really ought to subject herself to a reality check for volunteering to do this a second time.

I would like to take a minute to mention the fifteen organizations in Louisiana who are the official co-sponsors (actually having received an update this morning, I believe it's up to eighteen co-sponsors) of this conference, to give an indication of the kind of broad based support throughout the state which will be necessary, not only for this conference to succeed, but for any future efforts in the area of literacy. I want to stress that this type of collaborative effort is not incidental and I hope that you will bear with me while I mention them, because the organizations themselves give an indication of the kind of multiple intersections among organizations necessary for this effort.

In addition to the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, which in this instance can only take credit for providing the grant and not doing the work, the other sponsors are:

The Louisiana Library Association; The Louisiana Office of Literacy; The Louisiana Coalition for Literacy; The Louisiana State Library; The Baton Rouge State Times/Morning Advocate; The New Orleans Times Picayune; The Capital Area Literacy Coalition; The Council for Better Louisiana; The Plantation Education Program; The New Orleans Public Library; The East Baton Rouge Library The East Baton Rouge Adult Basic Literacy Program; The Louisiana Council of Education; The Migration Refugee

Service-ESL; The Louisiana AFL-CIO; The Louisiana Public Broadcasting; and St. Paul's Learning Center.

I apologize if I have somehow omitted anyone.

As I look back on the first literacy conference from the vantage point of a year later, I'll confess that I have somewhat mixed feelings about the present state of literacy efforts here in Louisiana. It boils down to the old paradox of the optimist's and pessimist's view of a half a glass of water... whether it's half full or half empty. This situation is rather like the story my father told me back when he taught me how to play chess about the old man who was discovered playing chess with a dog.

"Isn't it wonderful," said his friend, who found them huddled around a chess board propped on top of an old oil drum, "A dog who can play chess."

"That's not so wonderful," replied the old man, "I have beaten him two out of the last three games!"

Clearly this man was a pessimist. I believe that the rest of us would have sided with the dog. Unfortunately, at this time last year, I recounted for you some basic facts confronting literacy advocates here in Louisiana; facts which define a problem of immense proportions in the report of the Louisiana Literacy Task Force chaired by Patti Roemer. For instance, according to the 1980 census, 8% of the state's adult population, 25 years of age and older, had fewer than 5 years of schooling, ranking Louisiana 50th of 50 states. Over the past decade, nearly 1 in 2 adults has failed to complete high school. Our high school graduation rate has been placed at 58 to 62%, giving our state one of the highest drop out rates in the nation. The National Center for Education estimates that of 16% of the adults in Louisiana, 1 in 6 are unable to read on any level, and more than a quarter of the state's population over 16 had less than a high school education and were not enrolled in school--43% of all adults in Louisiana.

We are talking about a quarter of the state's population not being able to read and function adequately in our society. This is more than the combined population, including men, women, and children, of New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and Shreveport combined--our three largest cities. These were statistics mentioned by myself and others last year and I think that part of the problem compounding this is the state high school graduation rate which I mentioned. This really means that we are continuing to duplicate the problem, and add to it at an exponential rate. It's not as if we have a problem and mechanisms are in place that are stemming the

growth of that problem, in fact, the problems in our entire structure that created the problem in the first place are still there and continue to expand.

In the few, more recent statistics that I have seen about education in Louisiana there is little to challenge these previous figures. I suspect that the estimate of the Louisiana Literacy Task Force (that it would require 66 million dollars a year for 10 years to mount an effective statewide literacy program in Louisiana just for adult literacy), is probably still largely accurate and yet last year our Legislature advocated about two hundred thousand dollars to literacy. That's the pessimist's view.

On the other hand, I know that local efforts have been continued during the past year by many community based groups such as those which have sponsored this project. I recently learned that a coalition up in Shreveport has just received itself a $200,000.00 grant from the Department of Education for a workplace literacy program. That is a very positive sign. I believe that this is the largest grant of that magnitude to come to Louisiana for these sorts of efforts and that is an important development. Secondly, those of you assembled here this morning indicate that there are organizations throughout the state that continue to be deeply concerned about this problem, and are involved in its solution. I am also happy to announce that

> *"We are talking about a quarter of the state's population not being able to read and function adequately in our society. This is more than the combined population, including men, women and children of New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and Shreveport combined--our three largest cities."*

last Friday, the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities awarded a major grant to the East Baton Rouge Public Library and that grant was for a family reading program.

In a sense, following the course from last year's conference presenters, Patricia Edwards, Victor Swenson, and Ramona Lumpkin, this program, which will take place this coming summer will involve 50 families in a 6 week reading program with their children. The Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities has been one of three staffs nationally which for the last decade, has had a sustained adult reading program. Not a literacy program, pitched more on the level of a college sophomore survey, the Endowment had placed adult reading programs in parish libraries. Also, for decades, there were summer reading programs for children; but this is the first program, I believe, that is being developed as a family reading program,

intended to address both the problems of reading for elementary school students and also students of adult literacy programs. If it succeeds in East Baton Rouge (and I have every confidence that it will), this is the sort of program which the L.E.H. will in the future expand statewide and hopefully, place in as many parishes as we have the adult reading program.

That's where we are at this juncture. As I say, that glass is both half full and half empty. There is a problem out there. It's being identified. We have had the wisdom to hold these conferences to bring to us here in Louisiana, experts from throughout the country to provide us with a range of perspectives. Community based groups, universities, labor unions, and businesses are combining to begin the effort. My only concern, very frankly, (I like to be a cheerleader but on the other hand I suffer from being a realist), is that the funding needs to be put into place to make these programs possible. All the good will in the world, all the good intentions in the world, will not correct this problem unless there is a radical reallocation of funds by state and federal governments for literacy programs.

Dr. Michael Sartisky. *After receiving his M.A. and Ph.D. from the State University of New York at Buffalo, majoring in American literature, he joined the English faculty of the University of New Orleans where he taught for four years. For the past eight years, Dr. Sartisky has been Executive Director of the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities. In this capacity, Dr. Sartisky has devoted his efforts to developing the statewide program in the humanities which is the responsibility and mission of the LEH. Dr. Sartisky has served as Acting-Executive Director of the California Council for Humanities, the project director and chairman of the Advisory Board of the LEH's* **Readings in Literature and Culture** *and* **American Vistas** *reading programs in parish libraries.*

STATE OF THE STATE OF LITERACY IN LOUISIANA

Ben Brady
President, Louisiana Coalition for Literacy

Have you ever considered yourself among the estimated 350,000 Louisianians who are illiterate? I must confess that I had not until I read that we all are illiterate in some way, whether we admit it or not! If I had a blackboard behind me and I put on it a quadratic equation and asked you to solve it and then determine the absolute value, how many of you could do that? Can I have a show of hands? From the number of hands I see, I believe the majority of you will admit illiteracy in the area of Albegra II. What about the terms "blanche," or "saute"... some of you who are familiar with cookbook terminology will know what I am referring to... others will not. We may be able to read and deduce that they are kitchen terms, but some of us would have to explore further what is actually meant by the terms before we could successfully carry out the actual recipe instructions.

I must tell you that prior to 1986, I was illiterate in the area of Lousiana's illiteracy problem! So, starting from ground zero, I had a great deal to learn, I would like to share some of it with you today, to put some things in a historical perspective and perhaps enlighten you in some aspects of what has and is going on statewide---a big picture overview!

I am not going to quote the usual statistics that refer to the total number of Louisianians who cannot read or write well enough to function in today's technologically advanced society. You've heard this many times before. Our drop-out rate from school is large and still must be addressed. Illiteracy in correctional facilities like the drop-out rate from public schools must be tackled, you know this already... what I will address is what has been going on in the last several years that is attempting to correct this intolerable situation that has prevailed so long.

The first sentence of Charles Dickens, The Tale of Two Cities, "It was the best of times it was the worst of times," accurately describes where we find ourselves today.

"The worst of times" in my estimation reflects our abyssmal statistics and why we have taken so long to do anything about this... How many lives have been wasted? "The best of times" I truly believe is now. So many things started happening and "literacy" became the buzz word, the hot topic... everyone wanted to get in on the act.

If you believe in astrology, you may have thought that all stars and planets are lined up in perfect order in the nation. Two politicians, George Bush and Buddy Roemer, were elected to high office with wives who chose to closely involve themselves with literacy efforts.

On the national scene, Barbara Bush is very visibly quite determined to show why reading and writing are important With the start of the Barbara Bush Foundation, family literacy projects all across the nation (including the Plantation Education Program at New Iberia), were successfully launched. All these were aimed at educating parents as to the critical role they play in the education of their children.

In 1986, Project Literacy, U.S. (PLUS) began as a collaboration between the American Broadcasting Association and Public Broadcasting Stations. The kick-off was on primetime with an ABC documentary narrated by Peter Jennings. ABC's entertainment division tried to enforce the thematic treatment of illiteracy into daytime soap operas, and primetime night programs. Between programs, public service announcements were carried. Print media also became involved. The American Newspaper Publishers Association mounted a major literacy awareness campaign among its 1400 members.

The Business Council for Effective Literacy, a national foundation to encourage and assist the involvement of business in promoting literacy, became more visible as more and more U.S. companies acknowledged that we had a problem and something needed to be done. This organization's newsletter is well worth reading.

Much praise for raising the nation's literacy awareness goes to the joint venture between the Coalition for Literacy, which includes the American Library Association and 10 other national organizations, and the Advertising Council of America.

A follow-up evaluation of this effort showed that over $24,000,000 was contributed by the media in time and space over a one year period. Add to their efforts the American Booksellers Association and National Association of College Stores, Telephone Pioneers of America, the Magazine

Publisher Association and such major foundations as Gannett and you can see what impact the awareness campaign had on the nation, as well as Louisiana and all the other state literacy efforts.

In Louisiana, about the time all this national awareness was taking place, we found ourselves in a Catch-22 situation. How could we effectively respond to telephone inquiries for help and volunteer tutors when at this time we had no mechanism to link community literacy organizations, prospective students and volunteers?

While working on a Gannett Foundation grant for the Capital Area Literacy Coalition and the La. Coalition for Literacy, the most revealing discovery was made while researching the information required: We had no idea what was going on and who was doing what, where. The right hand didn't know what the left was doing.

There was an attempt as early as 1980 to identify which groups dealt with the area of literacy, when The Louisiana Literacy Directory was developed by the State Literacy Council, as a special project of the Office of Reading, Louisiana State Department of Education. Again in 1986, The Literacy Committee of the Louisiana Library Association printed and distributed "The Louisiana Literacy Directory." The Baton Rouge State Times Morning Advocate compiled a 10 parish regional literacy directory entitled, "Literacy Directory: A Guide to Area Resources." In 1987, a statewide survey conducted by the Louisiana Coalition of Literacy identified 45 literacy groups in operation, many of which had not been identified in previous directories.

> ***"We who started working in this area in the 1980's probably perceived this portion of our state's literacy history as others before us saw the opening of the West--so much territory to explore and conquer, so much excitement, so much yet to be done."***

Over the years, community literacy providers for adults such as Operation Upgrade in Baton Rouge; Plantation Education Program (PEPI), New Iberia; Operation Mainstream, New Orleans; Volunteer Instructors Teaching Adults (VITA), Lafayette; Literacy Volunteers of America, Centenary College, Shreveport; North Central Louisiana, Louisiana-A Literacy Consortium, in the Grambling/Ruston Area; Central Louisiana Partners in

Literacy, Alexandria; Project Read, A Second Chance, Monroe; and Literacy Council of Southwest Louisiana, Lake Charles have come to the forefront. Numerous smaller groups are forming, parishwide literacy councils are springing up, and regional and area coalititons are becoming active. On 10 campuses Student Literacy Corps have organized.

The college Adult Education program in each parish has been making valuable contributions since about 1950. Lately many are working with those that are unable to read to form a partnership with local volunteer literacy organizations.

Corporate as well as governmental organizations have been instrumental in much of the activity in the area of literacy. One of the first to come to my attention was Cajun Electric in New Roads. They set up an in-house tutoring program where employeees are granted release time to participate. A wonderful videotape, "The Gift of Learning" was produced and distributed by Cajun Electric. For several years Entergy in New Orleans has funded a 1-800 literacy line; they have also partially funded a PALS computerized lab in New Orleans and a mobile PALS Unit in Mississippi, north central Louisiana, and another in the Monroe City School System under the auspices of the Louisiana Power and Light, Co. The State Times and Morning Advocate, has been a staunch supporter of literacy over the years. They established a literacy coordinator position on their staff, were responsible for a literacy resource directory and the beginning of the Capital Area Literacy Coalition. They also provide funds and numerous other support services. Wal-Mart stores in Louisiana and nationwide have been involved with training, awareness and funding. Lamar, a billboard company, has funded and provided billboard space across the state plus other services. The Alexandria city government and more recently, the Baton Rouge City Parish government have allowed literacy programs to be provided to needy employees. These are only a few of the earlier efforts by such organizations... Many more have been involved or are becoming involved in literacy opportunities.

Louisiana public libraries and the Louisiana State Library are also actively involved. A 1980 survey conducted by the Southwestern Library Association, found that Louisiana librarians required extra staff and funding in order to undertake literacy activities. In 1986, grants of up to $25,000 per library were made available to public libraries to conduct literacy programs through Title VI of the Library Services and Construction Act. To date, parish libraries in Louisiana have received $983,084 for literacy. In fact, the $312,318 received by this state in 1990 was the third highest in the nation, only behind California and Texas. That is a good indication of how serious those providing the grants perceive the literacy problem.

As mentioned previously, two organizations have come to the forefront in their attempt to bring some order to what is happening around the state. These are the Louisiana Coalition for Literacy, a statewide group, and the Capital Area Literacy Coalition, a ten-parish regional group with non-profit status which provides the conduit through which private and public awareness efforts, tutor recognition, workshops and many other activities that cannot be undertaken by smaller groups are performed.

These two groups joined together in 1987 and submitted to the Gannett Foundation a proposal for $100,000 entitled, "Agenda for a Literate Louisiana." Envisioned was the coordination of all existing literacy programs, the establishment of more programs where needed, increased financial support, both private and public, better communication, more public awareness about public and private literacy programs, cooperation with state and local government and greater philanthropic and corporate participation. Unfortunately, this proposal was not funded. However, we had recognized and pinpointed the greatest needs in this state, and didn't know it.

Earlier I mentioned Patti Roemer's interest. In January of 1988, she sought information from me about literacy which I provided. My excitement waivered somewhat when a newspaper article appeared in March of that year stating that she was also considering child abuse, needs of the elderly, high-risk children, and state beautification as possible areas of involvement. Much to my relief, she selected literacy and the appointment of the Task Force on Literacy got everything up and running. The Task Force reported to the Governor and to the Louisiana Legislature that there was a serious problem which needed immediate coordinated attention from several agencies within the state government. There was a need for statewide coordination and for private and public funding--- basically the same needs identified earlier in the Gannett proposal.

As a result of much hard work and the Task Force recommendations, the Louisiana Office of Literacy was established by an act of the legislature in 1989 and became operational in October of that year.

As witnessed by all assembled today at Louisiana's Second Literacy Forum and those who came to last year's Literacy Forum sponsored by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, the Louisiana Library Association and the Office of Literacy, we have come a long way and we have gradually, through hard work, dedication, perseverance, hard-headedness,

and downright orneriness gotten to this point and we will never go back. For your information, we can never retreat.

A glance at the January/February 1991 Louisiana Literacy Newsletter covers literacy involvement by the Shreveport Chamber of Commerce, the Louisiana Chamber of Commerce, the Louisiana Retired Teachers Association, the Rotary Club, Higher Education Council, the Louisiana Employment and Training Council, the Department of Corrections and Public Safety, the Louisiana Student Literacy Corp., the Palmetto Initiation (a housing project program in New Orleans), the LSU Medical Center in Shreveport, Statewide Adult Education Supervisors, CALCO, and the Louisiana Library Association. This gives an indication of all the things that are currently underway in this state at the present time. We, who started working in this area in the 1980's probably perceived this portion of our state's literacy history as others before us saw the opening of the West-- so much territory to explore and conquer, so much excitement, so much yet to be done.

So, enough of where we have been, let's get started with where we are going today and all the tomorrows that follow. We have an exciting roster of speakers before us, so I will remove myself to let us proceed!

Ben Brady *received his undergraduate degree at Northwestern State University and a Masters in Library Science at LSU-BR. He has been on staff at the Louisiana State Library since 1971 and has been the Associate State Librarian since 1979. Mr. Brady has been active in state and local library organizations for over 20 years. His valuable participation in library issues captured him the Special Humanities Award (co-recipient, Louisiana State Library 1988.) He has numerous publications including articles published in the* **ALA Yearbook** *and the* **LLA Bulletin.**

One of the most encouraging trends is the significant increase in organizations providing literacy services. The report of the Louisiana Task Force on Literacy reported 41 literacy providers in its 1988 survey. The number did not include the 65-parish adult education programs or any of the state's vocational-technical institutes which were providing literacy services. However, even accounting for all of the public institutions and the 41 cited providers, the number of literacy providers nearly doubled in less than two years. This fact is underscored by the 59 start-up programs since August 1990.

From *Louisiana Literacy Resource Guide,*
Louisiana Office of Literacy, April, 1991

LEADERS AND LITERACY: THE CHALLENGE MET AND UNMET

Wilma Dykeman
State Historian, University of Tennessee

Everyone loves to come to Louisiana and New Orleans, don't they? Well, I am particularly pleased to be here with this special group. I have always enjoyed every trip to New Orleans, but I especially looked forward to this one because of our mutual concerns. I remembered an experience I had a number of years ago when book mobiles first came into being...before most of you were born. Yes, it was a long time ago, but it is so exciting to think about, in the mountain areas, going up to the little coves, and hollows, and the big cities, going into the areas of the cities where the children and the adults did not have access to a library. The book mobiles were taking books to people who wanted books. So, I thought this would make an interesting article for one of those diverse magazines and I asked if I could go on a trip with a book mobile. I was cordially invited.

I got up before daylight, early one morning and went with the book mobile ladies off down the interstate highway and finally down a country lane to a little country store. Out of that store, early in the morning, came a whole group of people, young, middle-aged, elderly, all carrying their books, to renew their acquaintance with books for another three or four weeks. Well, as I came down the steps of the book mobile, (it was a beautiful spring morning, much like this morning, here in New Orleans), I stopped because there was there was the most wonderful fragrance in the air, and I said, "What is it? Something must be in bloom this morning, it is so fragrant." A dear little girl, about seven years old, and dressed in her gingham dress, stepped forward and said "Why it is us. When the book mobile ladies come, we put talcum powder in our bosoms." Well, she didn't have much bosom but she had a lot of talcum powder! I wanted you to know that I put on talcum powder this morning. To me it was one of the most gracious ways of showing appreciation, and I am sure many of you as librarians and literacy people receive this kind of thank you very often!

I especially appreciate being here because I am, in some ways, on the other side of the counter. I just had breakfast with the impressive array of experts that are here with you and I was beginning to feel just a little bit dismayed

by this... and then I realized that we were all engaged in the same adventure except from different sides of the coin. We share a vision.

I want to follow two things in this, the sense of aptitude and of attitudes. The aptitudes are the how... the how of literacy teaching, the basic fundamentals of reading and writing, and the attitudes are the why. It seems to me sometimes that we overlook the attitudes. Undergirding our aptitudes and indeed energizing and giving meaning to those aptitudes are our own attitudes, and that is the other aspect, "the why" that I would like to share this morning with you. I guess this is a very personal kind of talk because I wanted to share some thoughts of why one gives a great deal of life, time, energy, and attention to try to reach out through literacy, through writing, to reach those very people with whom you are working.

I would like to start the part about the aptitudes and the leadership by asserting what you already know. We are all leaders. We have those leaders who give us the means of achieving the vision, but if all us don't accept a leadership role where we are, the work of those leaders can never be as effective as it should be. Of course you agree with that because you are here, and you are becoming and are leaders in your place and in your time and in your community. We know that being literate will achieve a better income for us and of course that is essential, but leadership must give us reasons and a vision beyond, that will carry on over that first literacy aptitude and will bring us then to the real enduring enjoyment of literacy.

People always tell you on committees or in groups, "Isn't it wonderful you have the knack to be a writer." It's like the knack to be a reader. We may pick up something to read but there are so many ways to read...to read with a total sense of dedication and understanding, of trying to achieve and to know what the writer was saying, and that knack is the hard one-- rewriting and reworking, over and over those words, but it brings you to the sense that words are one of things that make us uniquely human.

The imagination that is captured in language, the vision that is captured in language, is something that no other living creature knows. Other creatures in this world feed and eat, and find shelter and reproduce and seek a place from the cold. So what sets us apart from the rest of the world? It is the words, the language, the imagination to know our past. What else knows its past in this world? And we can imagine the future. We capture that through language. We capture that in the visions of the letters we write, the articles we produce, the books that those of us who are writers try to produce, but also in our relationship with each other, and the way it affects us in all our communities.

So it is the wonder of language that I think sometimes we fail to remind ourselves about. I am most excited about a book before it is written, when I'm having the idea, when I am thinking about it. It's putting one word after the other and then finding it did not say exactly what I wanted it to say, so I go back and do it again. This is the same way with reading, sometimes not on the first reading do you understand...it's going back and rediscovering the richness, the richness that is underneath, that makes writing and reading the greatest adventure and particularly human and creative adventure for all. And so, we must communicate that sense of adventure to those with whom we work... not "well you know, reading is really good for you."

Do you know any athletic director, in any school in the world, that goes in and says " We really have a great football team because it is good for you to exercise." They go in there and they say, "This is exciting, this is something you can give your whole body and soul and time and energy to," and yet so often, we say, "Well, reading is so good for you and you'll learn more and let's get down to it." This is kind of a downbeat or caster oil approach, when actually it is the vitamins, the vigor, the whole sense of participating in the human adventure that should be part of our approach.

I always remember that the great Euripides had a line in one of his dramas, " A slave is he or she who cannot speak his thoughts." As you think about that, consider the slavery that not only those who cannot read or write endure, but that many of us endure, because we have not worked, or thought, or considered or valued, or judged the words by which we may free ourselves. So the use of language is one of the great freedoms and yet again it's one which so often seems to lack excitement.

> ***"So, the use of language is one of the great freedoms and yet again it's one which so often seems to lack excitement."***

I wanted to share with you, from my writing, a couple of people that I consider leaders and yet, one of the names--the first name--will never be known. She was a woman, a fictional character, and she grew from research that I had done for some of my books.

This is a woman who lives in the mountains after the Civil War, her family divided through terrible conflict. The farm has been destroyed, and she is eighteen years old. As the novel begins, her husband is returning from the war; he had been in prison and he is very bitter with all that has happened. Eventually he goes out west to seek greener pastures and his wife is left

there in the mountains, to hold the little farm, to keep the children, to keep the family, to build a home in the little community. This novel is called "The Tall Woman;" the title comes from a mountain saying "a tall woman casts a long shadow." Her name is Lydia McQueen and it is set in the years after the Civil War. She is left there on the mountainside during the winter and she has been struggling to get a school. Her father had brought books from Virginia when they came and settled in the mountains. She knows without a school, without books and reading, this little community will never be civilized. So she has been struggling along with keeping her family together and to try and get a school. It's a winter morning, and she's down cleaning her spring when she looks up and sees riding in the path the doctor whose been helping her in her effort to get a school.

"Lydia was down by her spring the last day of January, the afternoon had been warmer than usual and she had come to dip out any leaves that might have blown into the water since the storm. When Dr. Hornsby rode into the yard she called to him, he came striding towards her. "What are you doing on this bleak day on this God forsaken mountain," he asked.

She laughed at the gloom of his words, belied in part by the hardiness of his smile.

"Why am I cleaning my spring!"

"Well, pray tell me Lydia McQueen how do you clean a spring, do you wash the water?"

"Don't be making fun of me." She pointed - "look there at that ledge under the roots where the poplar trees grow and tell me if you have ever set eyes on a bolder, finer stream or a cleaner one."

He went and looked, the natural bowl of water surrounded on three sides and overhead by a ledge of rock. The roots of poplar trees stood clean and cold as glass around the spring and beside the stream that flowed from it. Someone had worked here in this corner of the earth lovingly.

"Well no," he said. "I never set eyes on a bolder, finer spring or a cleaner one." Then suddenly with his riding whip he snapped a leaf from a gaylock. "Sometime I am going to bring you good news, but now I have bad news for you Lydia McQueen."

She clutched her shawl, "What is it?"

"Hamilton Nelson will fight you on getting your school in Thicketty Creek."

She waited for him to go on. "Was that your news?" He nodded and she laughed and threw back her head, her shawl fell loose and her hair fell around her shoulders. "Why the news might have been of Mark out West, or one of the children."

"Well I thought a school meant so much to you," he said stiffly, "I misjudged."

"Oh no, a school means everything to me, Dr. Hornsby. It's Hamilton Nelson who doesn't mean anything." The doctor looked at her laughter and sarcasm, amazement mingled in his look.

"Hamilton Nelson is the biggest taxpayer in this county. Hamilton Nelson is a powerful man."

"The power of a rock," she agreed. "Well then there is something stronger than rock. Do you see that ledge over my spring? I have seen that ledge cracked by the stem of a little vine that had come up through it to sunlight, there is nothing strong enough to stop the power of growing things and children are stouter than any vines."

He walked down the path with her, "I am glad to have seen you, Lydia McQueen. I am glad to have seen your spring.""

Well... it's a very small scene in the book. But it seems to me to be the vision of what we are talking about... that one person who has never been more than fifteen miles from her home can overcome many of the things that have been suggested here this morning...the apathy, the indifference, the problems.

The other leader that I would name to you is one I am just finishing a book about. This is the most amazing book because it a wonderful true story and yet I call it a novel because there are so many facts about the life of Sequoya that we cannot document. I don't want my novel, my story destroyed by some historian saying it was not 1775, when he was born, it was 1776. We are not sure when he was born, but we do know that he was one of the true authentic geniuses, not only of America, but of human kind.

He did something that no other human being in history has ever done. By himself, he invented a written language which made a whole nation literate overnight. Within weeks after Sequoya introduced the alphabet, almost

overnight, people could read. Within a matter of months they were translating the Bible and hymnals, within a matter of a year they had a written constitution, and within a year and a half they had a newspaper.

Think about all the great freedoms that we enjoy, coming to these people so quickly because of this written language. So as I began to think about this and what an inspiration this could be, I discovered all kinds of things about this person. His mother was of the great plains clans of the Cherokee Indians. His father was a distinguished trader from Baltimore. He was lame in a society that honored and cherished the athlete and the warrior; he was lame, he was handicapped.

He grew up in a society that we have known so little because we have been so careless about the whole native American experience. We have completely overlooked the interplay between the African and the native American heritage...how they came together and shared many of their folk tales and many of their beliefs. So I have in this novel a young run away slave from Charleston N.C. who comes and lives in the Cherokee village, while Sequoya is growing up.

He (Sequoya) worked for several years trying to find a way to devise an alphabet. He started out with pictures for each word. What picture do you have for love? What picture do you have for caring, for all the things that we can't define? After he had worked on this alphabet, on pieces of bark, for years, he came back one day and his wife had taken the hundreds of pieces of bark and burned up all his work... so he started all over again. Finally he went to the great Cherokee council and introduced his alphabet. The way in which he introduced it was with his little daughter. They called it magic because it released the talents and the history of a people.

"I will prove it to the council, my little girl will stay in one part of the village and I will go to the other end of the village and she will write down the words you say and you will bring me the talking leaf."

They did this and they could not believe that the words that they had said in council could be interpreted at the other end their of the village. It was like an explosion had happened.

Well you can see that I am excited about this novel, about discovering and sharing the culture of a people and there is so much that is bound up in this story.

The challenge then, to be leaders. These are simply two examples of people who were leaders, a lone mountain woman and unknown Cherokee. He

never received any money for what he had written and what he had given to his people. He received a medal that he wore the rest of his life. Yet he had given this great and wonderful magic to his people.

I want to close by addressing again (just for a moment) the why, the why of literacy and the why of reading, and the why of sharing our experiences. To mention again that this is what makes us human, that we walk for a little while, in other peoples shoes. When reading we can go back, for centuries... we can imagine the future. We are for a little while, out of the greatest prison any of us ever know, the prison of our flesh. It's imagination, and its words, and its communication that lets us for a little while be free of that prison and be another life.

I have a column that I write in the Scripps-Howard paper. Very often I find that experiences that I have had are very similar to those that others have had, so I collected some of them. I collected them and I kept looking for a title for these brief essays about life, about family, about travel. One of them is an exploration I made here in Louisiana when I discovered a wonderful place called Carville. There I found the title for my book.

We shall not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time! The exploration that comes through reading, through language, through knowledge of other experiences. So I called my book "Explorations" because that's precisely what it was. Many of them were explorations of that place. But then there was another kind of exploration and this is to me the why of literacy and language, that we become more human and we share that experience. I want to read you this essay:

"Midway this life we are bound upon, I woke to find myself in a dark wood where the right road was holy --- and gone. That dark wood of which Dante wrote awaits each of us, sometimes it presents itself on a sunny summer afternoon before we even know the invitation has been issued. The darkness gathers and we grope toward an ancient exploration, down, down into ourselves we go like a lost wanderer knowing no path through the woods, finding no light. No matter what age we may be by the calendar when the dark wood closes, in that moment, life on either side of the woods will never be the same again. Thus within the space of an hour on a late June afternoon I came into the dark woods. I must tell you at the beginning if the end is to have a meaning. On a sunny Sunday morning on a long ago August Thomas Wolf's sister brought a stranger to my house in Ashville. Thomas Wolf was a big exhilarate writer who wanted to bring all of America into the grand design of his fiction. Maynell Wolf was a big exhilarant woman who wanted to bring all her friends together in a warm

embrace and so she came with a young stranger from Tennessee, unannounced, early one sunny Sunday morning while I was in the flower garden cutting a fresh bouquet before the dew disappeared. I had a brand new degree from Northwestern University and a contract for a career to begin in New York in September. But as my visitor and I talked that day and that evening and the next day and the next evening we discovered that we were both interested in words and in woods, in being very social on some occasions and very much alone at other times. We were passionately fond of travel and equally happy to stay at home. We liked the mountains and the little people up the cove."

This goes on about her marriage, his death. She learned about walking-wounded, sharing of life's adventures together, tall men and tall women, and working leaders.

Wilma Dykeman *is Writer-in-Residence and Professor of English at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. She is the award-winning author of several books of fiction and non-fiction, dealing primarily with the South. A native of North Carolina, she is very active in education, having served on the Board of Directors of both the University of North Carolina at Asheville and Berea College.*

NATIONWIDE TRENDS IN LITERACY

Evelyn Ganzglass
Director, Training and Employment Programs
National Governors' Association
Washington, D.C.

In September 1990 the President and Governors met in Charlottesville, N.C. at a historic education summit. At that meeting, they enunciated six national education goals. One of those six was on adult literacy and life-long learning. It says:

> *By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills needed to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.*

The concept of literacy articulated in this goal is functional and clearly much broader than reading or writing. Literacy involves the skills and abilities needed for individuals to pursue personal objectives and realize their fullest potential. This goal provides a formidable challenge to all of us involved in human resources development throughout the country.

To accomplish this goal, we must think of education as a life-long enterprise. People must have access to programs appropriate to their particular needs regardless of their motives. For many, literacy skills will best be learned within a work context: for mid-career workers, this may be on-the-job; for those preparing to enter into the workforce, it may be within the context of a welfare to work or other employment and training program. For some, working with a volunteer in a one-on-one session may be what's needed.

Achieving the national literacy and adult learning goal will require more of the delivery system we now have as well as an increase in the scope and scale of our effort. In reality, what we now have is a patchwork of rather fragmented, largely underfunded programs that provide neither sufficient, nor often appropriate, opportunities for adults to learn the applied and conceptual skills they need to function effectively in society. Programs are not intensive enough, accessible enough or relevant enough for many people's purposes. Achieving the national literacy goal will also require more responsive programs and better integration of the policies and

management processes of state education, employment and training, welfare, economic development and literacy agencies, and those of volunteer, private and other organizations.

As a follow-up to the Education Summit, NGA issued a report last summer recommending state strategies for achieving the national education goals. We also asked Governors' offices, state agencies, state-wide literacy organizations to tell us what was going on within states so that we could get a general picture of where states were relative to these recommended strategies. We received at least one response to our survey from 49 states, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and District of Columbia.

Since not all constituencies responded from each state, we may have missed some things that are going on; but we believe that we got a fairly accurate picture of the status of literacy initiatives throughout the country.

In our report on strategies to achieve the national education goals, we recommended that states demonstrate strong leadership and bring together key literacy leaders to secure the necessary commitment to building a state infrastructure for adult literacy and basic skills instruction. By infrastructure we meant:

-integrating planning and formalizing coordination and collaboration among delivery systems within the state

-facilitating the involvement of key state-level and state-wide players in the formulation and implementation of policy and programs

-monitoring and evaluating all publicly financed programs in the state

We found that 40 states had a state-level coalition, council, commission, or partnership that serves, at a minimum, as a coordinating mechanism for literacy-providing agencies and organizations. In most cases, the activities of these entities don't extend beyond public awareness and rarely does their membership include all relevant service providers.

We found Governors in 18 states directly promoted literacy through Governors' offices, special initiatives and use of discretionary federal dollars for literacy purposes.

Governor Roemer is one of the Governors who has clearly provided personal leadership in this field. Thirty states have enacted literacy -- specific legislation during the last four years. Such legislation typically

appropriates state funds for literacy programs or authorizes a new state office or agency for adult literacy.

In our report, we recommended that states try to determine the dimensions of their literacy problem by 1) conducting an accurate and reliable assessment of the literacy and basic skills ability of their adult population; and 2) determining what services are available, who is participating in these services, where people are getting services, and who is paying. We are convinced that this information is necessary to set priorities and identify gaps in services.

We found that accurate and reliable state-specific literacy assessments are rare. Many states base literacy problem estimates on census data, though this data has serious weaknesses for measuring the impact of programs over long periods of time.

Hawaii and Puerto Rico have made attempts to move beyond this approach. Mississippi and Oregon have conducted their own statewide literacy assessments using the instrument developed by ETS for DOL study.

In the report we also recommended that states set priorities and performance expectations for all publicly financed literacy services and encourage the private and non-profit sectors to commit themselves to achievement of these priorities and performance expectations. We suggested that performance objectives be stated in terms of desired learner outcomes and that priorities be established to target services to key populations, industries, economic sectors or geographic areas.

> *"...we found that some states have begun to bring coherence to the fragmented array of programs and providers that make up the current delivery system for adult literacy and basic skill services. However, much work remains to be done."*

We found that about 1 in 3 states have established some type of state level performance expectations for literacy services. These include both broad outcome goals and process goals related to program and system objectives. Louisiana is among the states that have articulated performance expectations of the system.

We recommended that states create accountability systems for all providers that establish clear performance standards and ensure quality programs. To do this states will need reliable and consistent information on program performance across a broad spectrum of programs. It also suggests that a system of consequences -- incentives and sanctions -- related to performance needs to be put in place to make standards meaningful.

Fourteen states (including Louisiana) told us they have state level performance standards or quality measures for adult literacy programs. Eleven of these have client-related standards. We don't know the extent of which these performance standards are backed up with either incentives or sanctions.

In our report we recommended that states expand opportunities for experiential learning and increase the range of settings in which learning occurs. This means establishing workplace literacy and family literacy programs, encouraging employers to invest in upgrading skills of their employees and focusing on basic skill instructions within JTPA and JOBS programs.

We found that about 1/3 of states have implemented some type of systematic mechanism to foster business and/or union involvement in adult literacy either through a specific coordinating mechanism or specific program. A smaller number of states have developed statewide family literacy efforts.

We recommended that states establish comprehensive credentialing systems using a competency-based approach to skill certification which begins in school and continues through life as people take part in formal and informal adult learning activities. We also recommended that states promote professional development to upgrade the quality of professional volunteer instructors in adult learning programs and that states promote self-directed learning and consumer choice through public awareness campaigns, outreach and counseling and information systems. Such information and counseling systems should help the client find the right kind of services to meet his or her needs and interests. Most states have not yet focussed on these issues although we know some states like Massachusetts have begun staff development programs.

In summary, we found that some states have begun to bring coherence to the fragmented array of programs and providers that make up the current delivery system for adult literacy and basic skill services. However, much work remains to be done.

While we continue to work with you and others at the state level, a National Education Goals Panel has been formed to report on progress toward achieving national goals for the next ten years. The Panel, chaired by Governor Roy Romer of Colorado, will issue its first report this fall, a document to establish a national baseline for adult literacy information.

A lot has been happening throughout the county; but a lot more work remains. Meetings such as this provide you with ar invaluable opportunity to build an adult learning delivery system for the state of Louisiana that is up to meeting the challenges posed by your diverse population and needs. I wish you well in your deliberations.

Evelyn Ganzglass. *Since 1984, Evelyn Ganzglass has been the Director of the Training and Employment Program with the National Governors' Association, Center for Policy Research. In this position she manages the National Governors' Association's policy analysis, research, information sharing and technical assistance activities related to training, employment and other education activities. She has served as author of several major reports of the governors on education reform, economic development, welfare prevention and workforce issues, including* **Work and Welfare: A Briefing Paper for New Governors** *written with J. Figuero, 1987.*

The Office of Literacy

The Louisiana Legislature created the Office of Literacy in 1989 charged with the following purposes and goals:

- To facilitate the development and coordination of literacy efforts in the state of Louisiana, both public and private,

- To increase the number of persons served, thereby enabling them to better their employment, enhance their self-esteem and participation in and enjoyment of the activities of Louisiana society,

- To advise the governor and other policymakers on all matters relating to illiteracy,

- To make recommendations for the budgeting, allocation, and appropriation of all monies available for adult literacy services, state, federal, public, and private,

- To provide an evaluation system and a reporting mechanism for all services provided,

- To recommend and suggest new approaches to adult literacy,
- To serve as a public advocate, representing literacy providers, students, public sector and private literacy endeavors,

- To establish literacy criteria,

- To help citizens of Louisiana to gain the ability to use printed and written information, to function in society, to achieve their goals and to enhance their knowledge and potential, and

- To encourage all persons who are sixteen years of age or older and not enrolled in school to enroll in an adult literacy program.

From *Louisiana Literacy Resource Guide,*
Louisiana Office of Literacy, April, 1991

THINK LITERACY, THINK NEWSPAPERS

Mary Ann Gentile
Southern Newspaper Publishers Association

"Think Literacy, Think Newspapers" is a program begun by SNPA, my organization, two years ago. We have 425 newspapers from Oklahoma to Virginia. As many of you heard this morning, in a lot of communities -- especially mid-size and smaller communities, but also some of the larger ones too, for instance, Atlanta -- the literacy efforts were very disorganized. No one was quite sure of who was doing what. Well, who better than a newspaper publisher to pull those efforts together. As we all know, newspapers must have a literate public to survive. But don't think it's just newspapers who are facing this problem, it's everybody's problem. To be effective we must all work together -- the providers, the media, businesses, educators, the entire community. The late Henry Ford, II, once said, "We can't take a slip shod and easy going approach to education in this country, and by "we" I don't mean somebody else. I mean me, I mean you. It is the future of our country, yours and mine, which is at stake." I hope that is the message you take home from this presentation today.

When we do work together we can achieve great things. In Houston, Texas ads featuring Houston business leaders were part of a $1,000,000 fund raising campaign for the local literacy coalition. These community leaders, from all walks of life, came together to say something about how literacy affected their communities. I'd like to add that the publisher of the Houston Chronicle, Richard Johnson, was chairman of that very effective fund raising campaign.

Newspapers' primary responsibility has been, and should continue to be, creating public awareness about literacy and how it affects their communities. Newspaper ads, features, and editorials can bring attention to the problems as well as the possible solutions. Newspapers across the South are making a concerted effort to feature this story prominently. Recently, the Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel ran classified ads with the state literacy hotline number. The Florida Literacy Coalition tracked the calls that came in as a result of the classified ads alone. There were 152 calls attributed to these ads over a 3-month period.

Some other awareness tools that anyone can use -- whether a newspaper, a business, a bank, an association -- are in-house newsletters. Make sure that your employees can talk about literacy activities and the providers that are available in your community.

Newspapers try to promote literacy awareness in other ways besides their news pages. Some of those have included shopping bags and rack cards. Rack cards are the cards which go on the outside of newspaper boxes and often talk about special series or easy to read pages that may be appearing that day. Also don't forget your employees who have a knack for speaking, or if you have a speakers bureau, make sure that you have literacy facts and figures about your community available. If you have an opportunity, like I did today, take that opportunity to talk about literacy.

In Knoxville, Tennessee the newspaper printed a reading lesson on shopping bags for a local grocer. In Mississippi the Jitney Jungle bags also prominently featured the state literacy hotline number. I know about the results from Knoxville. That has just been a phenomenal campaign up there. Each bag had a series of 12 reading lessons for family literacy. What a tremendous way to reach that audience who might not read a newspaper. We are certainly aware of that in the newspaper industry. The Knoxville News-Sentinel added their logo to the bag and paid to have these bags made. There are a lot of newspapers out there who are willing to do this kind of joint effort with business.

The expertise of newspaper employees has helped literacy groups raise much needed funds. Most providers work on a shoe-string budget and lack of money is the biggest problem they have. I'm sure many of you are aware of that. Newspapers have found that many fund raising events raise both awareness and money. Those are the two primary goals that a lot of our papers have.

In Pensacola, Florida the newspaper sponsored and coordinated a Scramble for Literacy golf tournament which brought the entire business community together. Over $8,000 was raised for the local literacy coalition in the first year of this tournament and that was for a coalition which, prior to that year, only had a $4,000 annual budget.

In Atlanta, a fund raiser featuring columnist Lewis Grizzard raised $30,000 for literacy action. Other special events by newspapers have included reading festivals, executive or corporate spelling bees, and celebrity book reviews. Often just recognizing the efforts of students and tutors is much needed and has been much appreciated.

In-kind resources are just as important as money. In Pensacola, Florida the newspaper had some old desks in a warehouse they were not using. When they heard that the literacy coalition there needed some furniture, especially desks, they said, "Well, we have these old rusty desks if you'd like to have these." One of the employees volunteered to paint the desks and they looked like new. The coordinator of the newspaper told me that, from the appreciation and gratitude, you would have thought they had been mahogany desks and not just old metal desks. You, as well as newspapers, are always surprised when they hear about how modest the needs of are for many of these groups and how some things that are just lying in the corner, whether an old desk or an old file cabinet, can be put to good use.

Two SNPA newspapers have been instrumental in helping to get literacy hotlines started in their communities. The Palm Beach Post started one last May. Last year, the Atlanta newspaper set up a literacy information line through the newspaper's information line which is called "222-2000." Some people called and asked, "Where can I buy a pizza?" Other people called and asked, "Where can I get help to learn to read?" They had 3,000 calls for reading help in the first five months of operation with this 222-2000 information line.
Another way that newspapers have helped the literacy cause is to collect books, especially for family literacy programs. Many children never have the opportunity to see books in their homes and that was surprising to many newspaper executives. In Columbus, Georgia the Columbus Led-

> ***"Newspapers have found that many fund raising events raise both awareness and money. Those are the two primary goals that a lot of our papers have."***

ger-Enquirer works with the Altrusa Club each year to collect books for a book sale from which the proceeds go to support the local literacy counsel. This has been an on-going event for several years and is something they plan to continue.

Newspapers, as well as a lot of businesses, tap their employees. Make sure that they are informed. One successful idea for getting the word out in the newspaper offices has been brown bag lunches where they would have a speaker or an author come in and talk about something related to literacy or literacy providers in that community.

A while back several newspapers had tutor training, but there got to be too many tutors and not enough students. In a lot of communities there are other things that employees could be doing, not just tutoring, but helping provide transportation or maybe following up in the office by being an office volunteer or helping provide speakers or coordinating speakers when needed. We redid some of our ads to get the message across that there are a lot of different roles that volunteers could play rather than just being tutors.

Newspaper employees have a lot of expertise that the community can tap. For instance, the Atlanta newspaper found that two tele-marketers were willing to help with a fund raising campaign. Those two tele-marketers used their techniques to raise over $100,000 for a literacy group in Georgia.

The Newspaper in Education activities provide an excellent means for furnishing tutors with the oppotunity to use newspapers. A publication was put together in Augusta, Georgia that was based on a lot of the Newspaper in Education ideas and gave these ideas to tutors for adult learners as well. When you get home, check with your newspapers and see if those NIE coordinators will do workshops for your local literacy groups or at the library showing them how to use the newspaper with beginning readers.

Other things that newspapers have done to show their support has been to offer incentives to new grads of literacy programs. What better way than with a newspaper subscription? This has been very effective in several communities, not only as a present to these people, but to get newspapers into their homes and to let them know that there are things in the newspaper that they can read. We've had newspapers, primarily in South Florida, that are always sponsoring annual luncheons or receptions on Literacy Day for students. They've worked with bookstores to give gift certificates to graduates of literacy programs. The same goes with plaques and certificates. Often your newspapers will help print those or give a grant to do those kinds of things.

In this year of the lifetime reader we all should be encouraging employees to continue education, whether its beginning, or graduate work, or fun kinds of skills that we all want to improve. But, in education, the message this year should be "LIFELONG." I'm sure it's no surprise to you to know that the larger papers, like the Palm Beach Post and the Richmond, Virginia newspapers, all have very, very active workplace literacy programs. Last week I learned that a small newspaper, the Daily Reflector in Greenville, North Carolina, started a workplace literacy program for

three of its employees. The publisher there has made such a commitment to literacy in his community that he was willing to start classes for just three employees. I was also delighted to hear that one of those employees was so excited about the program that be began talking about it with his co-workers. They had tried to keep it confidential to protect the participants, but this one employee was so proud of the fact that he was learning to read that he couldn't help talking about the program. The result was that several other employees went into the office of the program coordinator, shut the door and said "I would like to get help too, I've heard about these classes." So word of mouth through this very small newspaper certainly traveled fast.

One of the most important things you can do is keep informed about these issues. There are many, many resources available. A few are:

- Southern Newspaper Publishers Association
- Business Council for Effective Literacy
- Local and State Literacy Coalitions
- National Coalition for Literacy
- American Newspaper Publishers Association

I particularly want to point out the Business Council for Effective Literacy. They have an excellent newsletter that summarizes, each quarter, various activities and events that businesses are doing all over the country. There are some really creative ideas in the newsletter.

BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO IS COMMIT YOURSELF TO MAKING A DIFFERENCE. I'm often asked, by skeptical newspaper types, "Are we making a difference?"

I'd like to end with a story I heard last week from Parade Magazine editor, Walter Anderson, who says he got the story from Wally Amos of Famous Amos Cookies.

There were hundreds of thousands of starfish which had washed up on a beach. A little boy and his father were walking along and the little boy hurriedly started picking up the starfish and started throwing them back into the water. His father said, "Why are you doing that? There are hundreds of thousands of them. You can't possibly make a difference." The little boy took a deep breath, reached down, picked up one of the starfish, and threw it out into the water as far as he could. He turned to his father and said, "It made a difference to that one.".

I'D LIKE TO CHALLENGE ALL OF YOU TO GO OUT AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

If I can help in getting individual newspapers in your community moving to help you out, just let me know.

Mary Ann Gentile *is the literacy program director for Southern Newspaper Publishers Association, which is based in Atlanta, GA. She joined SNPA in January 1989 to coordinate a literacy awareness program for the 425 daily newspapers who are members, as well as to create services to help them promote literacy efforts in their communities. Ms. Gentile became a volunteer tutor with Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA). She has served as a tutor trainer as a member of the program committee for LVA-Metro Atlanta. In 1990, she was named to LVA's national VITA Corp. She conducts workshops to teach tutors how to use the newspaper in their lesson plans.*

LITERACY EFFORTS OF THE NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY

JoAnne Ellis
formerly with Newspapers in Education
Sun Herald - Biloxi, Mississippi

About twenty years ago, I had the privilege of working in a library; consequently, I know first hand the joy of helping people find just the right article to make a research paper make sense. I know the thrill of watching a pre-schooler choose a book that delights her or him. However, I am now teaching speech and theater at a community college, and wouldn't you know the first production I am involved with is *Music Man*. Of all of the heroines Meredith Willson could have chosen to be the star, the most important person in the musical, the best and brightest part, went to a librarian!

Marian, the Librarian, is portrayed as a sensitive and caring leader, just as most librarians I know are. But as we meet in one of the most famous river cities in the United States, we must admit that just as in the River City of *Music Man*, we've got trouble.

In his March 5, 1991 column in *The Sun Herald*, David Broder explained that "trouble." In that day's column, Broder reported the findings of the Committee for Economic Development, a policy and advocacy group made up of 250 leading business executives. They chose the morning after President Bush's speech ending the Persian Gulf War. The report said: "Unless we act swiftly and decisively to improve the way we invest in our most important resource---our nation's children---we are jeopardizing America's survival as a free and prosperous society and condemning much of a new generation to lives of poverty and despair."

"The system must be redesigned to do two things: First, it has to reach out into the community to enable parents to avail themselves of the services their children need. And, second, it must deliver continuing social services at school to help youngsters become active, eager students while allowing teachers to concentrate on their real job of education," according to James J. Renier, chairman of the task force.

Broder said we needed a domestic General Norman Schwarzkopf. And I told them that I knew who that was---Marian the Librarian of course.

Newspapers can be the best allies of the librarians if they will just call on them. The following programs are already in existence:

At the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, the newspaper donates newspapers for "newspaper night" at the library and for other literacy activities including monthly subscriptions for adult students. (Call Jim Rodewald, 907-456-6661 ext. 296)

The Daily Camera in Boulder, Colorado, participates in the Boulder Public Library's Learning to Read program by donating news and advertising space, funds, manpower and support. (Call Barrie Hartman at 303-442-1202)

The Washington Post has awarded a grant to the Howard County Library to purchase a van which serves as a mobile resource for the county's Project Literacy. (Call Virginia Rodriquez at 202-334-7973)

In 1987 the state attorney's office, local community college, public library, Laubach Agency and the Florida *Times Union* in Jacksonville reorganized a literacy coalition, Focusing on Founding (Call Caroline Charbonnet at 904-359-4447)

The Athens, Georgia *Daily News/Banner-Herald* held a corporate spelling Bee to raise money for three literacy projects in Athens. The Athens Tutorial program, Athens Tech Literacy fund, and Athens Regional Library Adult Literacy program all benefitted. (Call Barbara Powell at 404-549-0123)

The *Quincy Herald-Whig* in Quincy, Illinois sponsors library card sign ups for new adult readers. (Call Sue Welch at 217-223-5100)

Newsday in Long Island, New York published a directory of public and private literacy programs in Nassau and Suffolk counties. These directories have been distributed to local public libraries and other areas. *Newsday* also set up a literacy committee with public libraries and community-based groups to further the Long Island literacy effort and sponsored a symposium that highlighted literacy and the Constitution. (Call Reginal Tuggle at 516-454-2183)

At the *Daily Record* in Wooster, Ohio, during Buckeye Book Fair, an annual project held the first Saturday of November, 85 Ohio authors sign and sell their new works. Approximately, 5,000 reading enthusiasts meet the authors at the day-long event, which has free admission. Proceeds are

awarded in $500 grants to Ohio libraries and adult literacy programs. (Call Melody Shure at 216-264-1125)

The Killeen Texas *Daily Herald* targeted September 8, 1987 as Literacy Awareness Month. During the week designated as "Freedom to Read Week," 13,000 paperback books were distributed at the giveaway. Local libraries and the community college assisted by providing the give-away locations and support personnel. (Call Kathy Smith at 817-634-2125)

The Desert News in Salt Lake City, Utah has personnel who make presentations at library meetings. (Call Carolyn Dickson at 801-237-2140)

I ask each librarian to be the "star" of their own communities. I ask them to please call the Newspaper-in-Education coordinators at their local newspapers immediately upon returning to their local communities.

> ***"Newspapers can be the best allies of the librarians if they will just call on them."***

Jo Anne Ellis *served as the Educational Services Director for* **The Sun Herald** *in Gulport, Mississippi from 1985-1991. In May of 1989, she was appointed by Governor Ray Mabus to serve on the Advisory Council of Adult Education for the state. In April of 1990, she has honored as one of the fifteen most outstanding women of the Gulf Coast. She also assisted in the design of* **Look Around Mississippi and Learn**, *a twelve-week series of reading lessons that ran in over 60 Mississippi newspapers during the summer of 1990.*

MAKING IT HAPPEN: IMPLEMENTING LEARNING CENTERED EDUCATION

Eunice N. Askov
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This is an especially appropriate time to address the issue of literacy. The nature of American society is changing:

- technology is having a significant impact on the workplace and in society
- an increasingly sophisticated world market is changing the way business and industry consider international competitiveness
- changing demographics(increasing numbers of ethnic and racial minorities, women,older adults and handicapped individuals; decreasing numbers of youths) are altering the concept of American culture and the workplace
- an increasingly high level of competence in communication skills is required for success in both the community and workplace
- newly discovered concern for literacy on the part of employers,unions, public officials, media and others who are not educators.

National interest in adult literacy, as well as that of school-aged children, is growing. The public awareness campaign, Project Literacy U.S., brought literacy to the country's attention. The 1989 report from the Southport Institute for Policy Analysis, **Jump Start** (Chisman),encouraged the development of legislation, stressing that the nation's literacy-related problems are too complex to be solved by one agency or organization; addressing the problems will require cooperation among broad and diverse groups, including both public and private interests and involving education in job training programs, such as the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), in Second Chance programs, such as the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS), and in family literacy programs, such as the Even Start program. Renewed interest in the public schools has also resulted; educators as well as legislators are studying ways of making the K-12 curriculum more responsive to the needs of the workplace.

President George Bush, recognizing that education is "central to our quality of life" and "the key to America's international competitiveness," recently established National Goals for Education (1990). One of the six

national goals applies directly to adult literacy and lifelong learning: "By the year 2000, every Adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship." Educated individuals in the future must not only master the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic, they must also be able to think critically, communicate effectively, and adapt to a rapidly changing world." [Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) which is studying the role of basic skills as part of workforce preparedness.] As a nation, our leaders are recognizing that we must become dedicated to lifetime of learning and literacy to keep our nation's economy healthy and competitive.

Contexts for Literacy Instruction

Employers indicate that they need flexible workers who can solve problems and adapt to a changing workplace (Carnevale, Gainer, & Meltzer, 1989; Collino, Aderman, & Askov, 1988; Johnston & Packer, Rockerfeller Foundation, 1989; U.S. Departments of Labor and Education, 1988). The research indicates that "real life" workplace situations require an integrated use of literacy skills (rather than use of skills in isolation) and that most adult reading tasks focus on reading to complete tasks (reading to do) rather than on reading to learn which is typical of school-based reading (Mikulecky & Diehl, 1980).

Research indicates that we know of some instructional strategies that are successful in teaching adults basic literacy (reading, writing, computational) skills. One strategy that has become widely accepted is the functional context approach to instruction (Sticht, 1987). Instruction in basic skills is embedded in teaching some content that is important to the learner, such as job skills in the workplace or parenting in family literacy programs.

For example, the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Penn State, in a partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Municipal and Public Employees' Union (AFSCME), is developing a comprehensive, job-centered basic skills instructional model for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the "R.O.A.D. to Success" program provides transportation workers with technical content as well as job-specific basic skills necessary to pass the Commercial Driver's License examination. Now in its second cycle of funding, the project is developing additional materials appropriate for adults reading below a fourth grade level, guidelines to facilitate the use of the materials by volunteer tutors, and a statewide delivery system which makes the curriculum available to additional state agencies and munici-

palities. The workplace literacy curriculum is delivered both by computer and print materials, giving workers competence in using modern workplace technology.

Another Institute project "Job Trails" is developing computer-based job-related basic skill assessments and instruction in basic literacy and problem-solving skills. Basic skills for five occupational clusters (clerical, retail, maintenance, health, and food service) are assessed and taught using materials from those job domains. Funded by the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Commerce, Job Trails is available in public libraries, job training, welfare-to-work, and adult education programs in Pennsylvania in a current field test.

Similarly, family literacy programs that use the functional context of parenting have become popular, especially with the recent funding from the Even Start Act legislation which provides literacy instruction for educationally and economically disadvantaged adults and their young children. Research indicates that cycles of poverty and illiteracy are intergenerational in nature (for example, Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1984). Winters, Rubenstein, and Winters (1987) report, for example, that parents who dropped out of school are more likely to have children who also drop out of school. Sticht concludes that adult basic literacy should be a high priority program for education policymakers "because the parent's educational achievement can be transferred to their children". In fact, of all variables influencing a child's achievement, the mother's level of education is most highly correlated to her children's

> ***"Family literacy programs attempt to educate and empower low-literate parents to work with their children in literacy skills."***

educational achievement. Therefore, the importance of providing access to appropriate educational programs for young mothers--especially those from ethnic minorities--has long-term implications (Sticht & McDonald, 1989).

Clearly, the current trend in early childhood intervention is away from working with children only and toward working with families (McCubbin, Olson, & Zimmerman, 1985). However, many parents of "Head Start" and "Follow Through" children do not have the skills necessary to read to their children or help their children with educational problems. These parents communicate to their children either a fear of educational situations, an

expectation of failure, or a sense that education is unimportant or irrelevant; such attitudes place these children in a high-risk category in terms of educational achievement. Family literacy programs attempt to educate and empower low-literate parents to work with their children in literacy skills.

Evaluators are also looking closely at the K-12 curriculum especially for those "at risk" youth who may drop out of school before graduation. The report ***The Forgotten Half*** (1988), commissioned by the W. T. Grant Foundation, stresses that the curriculum of American high schools is not responsive to the needs of those who are not college-bound. In fact, research indicates that "the American system of secondary vocational education has been only marginally successful in helping its students make the transition from schooling to employment" (Hoyt, 1990).

The U. S. Department of Labor (1989) had funded model programs in work-based learning (formerly called apprenticeships) with a strengthened basic skills component. The U. S. Departments of Labor and Education published the proceedings (1990) of a conference linking education and work. Likewise, educators and other thinkers (Dougherty, 1990; Hoyt, 1990; McPartland & Slavin, 1990; Pepple, 1989) have discussed the issue of preparation for the workplace for youth in school. The consensus seems to be that schools do not do a very good job of preparing youth in the literacy skills needed for the workplace.

Concluding Comments

While awareness and concern are being expressed, action is sporadic at this time. A few states, such as Virginia and Mississippi, have established literacy offices within their governor's offices and created foundations to attract private funds for literacy efforts. Other states, such as Pennsylvania, have appropriated state funds for literacy programs. Because the issue of literacy is not simple, simplistic solutions are not helpful. With a multifaceted problem, such as illiteracy, only complex answers make sense. Partnerships among schools, families, business/industry, government at all levels, and community organizations offer creative solutions to upgrading literacy skills which can serve as models to other communities.

Literacy services must be embedded in other efforts, such as workforce preparation, that are important to the individuals in need and helpful to society. Literacy skills offered in isolation from real-life concerns are not effective; low-literate adults are usually unable to transfer learning from one context to another. On the other hand, when literacy instruction is taught along with other relevant content that is important to the individu-

als, literacy skills are retained and used. In our R.O.A.D. to Success research (Brown, 1990) we found that the adults not only improved within the context that the skills were taught but also improved their general reading abilities. They became more able to engage in reading with their children and in other community settings.

The message that needs to be promoted is that learning and literacy are lifelong endeavors. Resources need to be present to assist those who need to upgrade their skills; acquisition and use of literacy skills do not end with high school graduation. The schools need to become responsive to the literacy need of all students, not just those preparing for college. All students need to learn about the resources in their communities for adult learning. Only through efforts in a variety of settings can our nation achieve adequate literacy skills for the future.

Eunice N. Askov *has devoted her career to literacy. She earned a B.A. degree at Denison University, M.A. in English and Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction (reading education) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has conducted research in adult literacy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Penn State, as well as at the University of Western Australia under a Fulbright Senior Scholar's Award. In addition to several book chapters, she is author of four textbooks on reading instruction. Also, she has published numerous articles in such journals as* **The Reading Teacher, Journal of Educational Research,** *and* **Adult Literacy and Basic Education.** *As professor of education and director of the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Pennsylvania State University, she provides leadership and research in adult literacy through various projects relating to applications of technology to instruction, workplace literacy, family literacy, special needs populations, and staff development.*

A 1982 nationwide study (the English Language Proficiency Study) predicted the percentage of individuals in each state who were likely to be illiterate. The study conservatively estimated that 16% of Louisiana's population was illiterate, placing it last among all fifty states. This conclusion was reinforced by a similar estimate by the National Center for Education Statistics.

From *Louisiana Literacy Resource Guide,*
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BUILDING STATE LITERACY SYSTEMS

Susan E. Foster
Brizius & Foster

When I look at the issue of literacy today, I am struck by its many faces. As we know, the face we see of any problem determines the response we make to it. Some of us see the face of the literacy problem as one of low skills which threaten economic prosperity. Some see the face of a political problem that doesn't seem to go away. Some actually see the faces of people confined by their lack of skills. Some see the faces of the children of people with low skills -- children whose prospects for the future may be equally dim. And some see the face of government.

I want to talk with you this afternoon about looking at the literacy issue through the face of government. And, I want to talk with you about how a response to this perspective might change the other faces of literacy as well.

At first glance, working through the government policy making process can appear to be an enormously complex and difficult task -- one many of us would just as soon shy away from. But if we look again we can gain wisdom from the old aphorism about how to eat an elephant -- one bite at a time. Understanding the state government policy making process and working through it one step at a time is the direction I'd like to take you this afternoon.

There are really two issues we need to talk about: One is the policy process itself and the other is the substantive issues we need to address in order to build an effective literacy strategy.

What is the policy process? It is simply the way issues or problems facing the state are raised and considered and the decisions are made on how to address them. Many of these processes operate simultaneously in state government. The preeminent policy process in most states is the budget process, but each agency has a planning cycle as well. Many states have statewide planning processes. Some have scanning processes. Other policy processes include federal plan development and issues manage-

ment processes operating through cabinet and sub-cabinet intrastate groups.

The issue of literacy has been implicit in many of these processes. There is even a state plan for literacy required by the federal government. But, rarely has the issue been featured, and if it has, it has mainly been dealt with as one of interagency coordination.

Approaching literacy from the face of state government means that we must focus on two fronts: 1) We must develop a statewide strategy to meet the needs of adults with limited literacy skills, and 2) We must also build an entire support system for literacy in our states. In the terms of structural engineering, we must build a literacy infrastructure.

What is involved in building this infrastructure -- this literacy system in our states? What does this mean? It means that we must build a support structure around and through our current literacy programs. We must build the mechanism for pulling existing literacy programs together. We must create a structure and environment and therein set performance standards for literacy programs, measure our successes and failures, and systematically assess how well our programs are faring. We must build the capacity to provide training for staff. We must develop the procedures for targeting funds and creating viable options for adult learners.

These are the bricks and mortar of a literacy system. Without them we won't be able to provide quality programs to the millions of adults who need them. With them we can move ahead.

Let's return to the steps we need to take to work through the state policy processes, and let's keep in mind that this isn't a process you will go through once and be finished. If we do our job right, we will revisit each of these steps many times as the literacy system develops and matures in our states.

For purposes of discussion this afternoon, I have grouped the issues we need to deal with into six areas or steps.

STEP 1: DEFINING THE PROBLEM AND ESTIMATING ITS SIZE

There are three different issues we must attend to in this step. The first is defining the problem. Many creative proposals have been dropped for want of a clear definition of the problem. Nationally and in many states we have become much clearer in the way define the literacy issue. We seem to have accepted that literacy is not an absolute state --- that it is really a

continuum of skills and literacy is an issue in the context of some other social goal.

So, the first step is arriving at a clear definition of what literacy is and what it isn't. The second step for the state policy maker is deciding why it is important to the state. Here is where we begin to see opportunities to address the issue of literacy in other state policy making processes. Nationally, we have primarily defined literacy as a workforce issue, but we are also defining it as a child development or an education issue. Others have defined it in terms of a prerequisite for involved citizenship. The essential point here is to make a clear link to other state goals. If this link isn't made well, it is unlikely that you'll have the support to go much farther.

In order to capture the attention of the chief policymaker which you'll need to insert the literacy issue explicitly into the key state policy processes, we have to identify the state goals for which literacy is a prerequisite for achievement. Literacy becomes an issue in the context of some other goal or social problem. To build an effective literacy strategy, we must stipulate those goals.

After we define the problem and clarify why it is important to address it, we are ready to move to the third issue in step one: estimating the size of the literacy problem. Essential to the policy making process is the ability to estimate how large a problem is and who it affects. Unfortunately, there are no completed studies which will tell you in your state how many people

> *"The essential point here is to make a clear link, to other state goals...We have to identify the state goals for which literacy is a prerequisite for achievement. Literacy becomes an issue in the context of some other goal or social problem"*

need what literacy skills for what purpose. And, there are no off the shelf methodologies that you can easily apply to existing data to give you the answers you need. You must develop a methodology for estimating the size of the population requiring upgraded literacy skills on your own.

This can be a major stumbling block. If you have succeeded in convincing the governor that literacy is, for example, an essential workforce issue and have obtained his agreement to include literacy planning in the state's economic development strategy, but cannot be more specific than na-

tional estimates about the size and shape of the problem, you may be in trouble again.

Fortunately, there is some hope for you. There are three alternatives at present that you could consider for determining the size and nature of the literacy problem in your state:

The first option involves participating in the National Adult Literacy survey being conducted by ETS. States can buy in to this assessment and obtain state-specific data.

The second option is the Mississippi or Oregon plan of designing and conducting your own statewide assessment. I encourage you to talk with Karl Haigler from Mississippi or Tim Houchen from Oregon to find out more about what they have done.

The third option involves developing a proxy for a statewide assessment by using census data. This will involve identifying factors highly correlated with literacy performance through regression analysis, producing a coefficient for each variable and applying at these coefficients to the Census Population Data. It is not clear how well this approach will work, but it could be tested by using it in a state which has already used one of the other two approaches.

Assessment results should fit into an overall literacy policy strategy and provide information for achieving other state and national goals. They should tell us what the different populations are that lack literacy skills and how far they have to move on the literacy continuum. In particular, you might consider several different and education initiatives or strategies.

Completing this step will cost you some time and some money, but it is absolutely necessary if you are to do the next step right.

STEP 2: TARGETING AND REACHING PARTICULAR GROUPS OF INDIVIDUALS

Once you have defined literacy and the importance of the issue, and estimated the size of the various populations needing literacy services, you are ready to target your efforts. Targeting is a very difficult policy issue because it necessarily involves exclusion. This part of the policy making process cannot be separated from politics and it is distasteful to many politicians. Although our instincts -- both political and humanitarian --

are to serve all who need literacy enhancement, this approach is not realistic given the resources required.

But we need to target for other reasons as well -- so that recruitment can be more effective and so that programs can be designed to meet the needs of learners with very different experiences and needs. To make decisions on targeting, we need to refer to the reasons why literacy is important in your state. Go back to the state goals you are trying to reach and begin to select those target groups whose skill enhancement would yield the greatest progress in reaching state or community goals. Divide the large groups needing assistance into sub-groups that can be identified through State records or records to which the State has access, and determine how far each sub-group must move if State goals are to be achieved.

The flip side of the targeting issue is that of attracting and retaining adult learners into our programs. This is one of the most difficult issues facing policymakers. Too often, this aspect of literacy is left to local providers to face alone. Any serious literacy strategy must address this issue at the State level as well. We know that even if we had enough quality programs out there to serve all who need help, we still have no guarantee that people would take advantage of them.

Part of the problem is the quality of our programs--something that we will discuss in a minute. Retention rates are low for other reasons as well. Too often adult learners do not see the relationship between what is being taught and what they need or want to know. There are, however, some notable exceptions emerging: first, workplace based instructional programs which link skill improvement to everyday job tasks and overall literacy improvement to job retention or advancement; second, family literacy programs where parents learn to read to their children. In both cases, the program goals are directly related to the goals of the learners--a clear motivation for staying with the program.

To attract adult learners into programs in the first place and keep them there, we will have to identify all the reasons why persons needing literacy training don't seek help. You all know many of the other reasons: they do not want to identify themselves as illiterate; they are unaware of where they can get help; they are fearful that they could lose their jobs; they have been able to get by without skill enhancement and won't do anything unless a crisis occurs; they feel overwhelmed by their dependent care or transportation problems, or their partner opposes their efforts to increase their skills.

These problems are all solvable, but they require attention at the State level as well as the program level. Some ways you can deal with these issues at the policy level are by working through programs that now finance literacy services. For example, the individual education plan required by the JOBS program provides an excellent context for addressing the problems of the individual. In our other programs such as JTPA and ABE, we could require that these issues be identified and addressed as part of each literacy program.

We could expand our efforts to offer information about where persons could go for assistance. We could train literacy counselors who would help individuals assess their skill level and how far they need to move up the literacy continuum and refer them to appropriate services. We might have these counselors help adult learners develop a contract with a literacy provider to realize a specific and measurable skill gain.

There are many other tools available to the state to attract or retain adult learners into literacy programs that could incorporated into a state literacy system -- that could form part of our literacy infrastructure:

- We could condition benefits & employment upon skill upgrading;
- We could use the tax system to influence the private sector to support literacy enhancement;
- We could use the licensing process to identify individuals who need additional skills;
- We could use a variety of State programs to influence local government responses to the literacy problem;
- And, we could employ tax incentives, stipends, unemployment compensation benefits, and other positive and negative sanctions to influence learners.

It is tempting to ignore Step 2 for it involves both a distasteful process--targeting--and a problem policymakers would just as soon leave to program people--attracting and retaining learners. But as with the others steps, we need to work through them.

STEP 3: MARSHALLING RESOURCES AND FINDING A LONG TERM HOME

The tools available to us in state government to bring to bear on the literacy issue are many and varied. The most apparent ones are the programs currently financing literacy programs. Our challenge is to marshall these resources--to weave together the Adult Basic Education

Programs, the Job Training Partnership Act Programs, the Family Support Act Programs, Vista, Library and Community Colleges Programs.

But the tools available to us extend beyond government programs. We also have resources such as the regulatory and taxation systems and we have the arm of government under which to bring together volunteer groups, labor and union leaders, employers and adult learners. But simple coordination of these groups is not enough. To create a strong garment or support, we must find some common threads. We must weave all these programs and actors together with the common threads of standards, performance requirements, training, assessment and research.

For example, the federal JOBS program requires states to assess the educational, child care, and other supportive service needs of each JOBS applicant. If literacy improvement is indicated, then the state contracts for service from existing agencies or creates new services if none are otherwise available.

In implementing the JOBS program, you can begin to create the threads that will weave these programs together. You can, for example, require that literacy providers from whom you purchase services receive pre-and in-service training in standards for quality literacy programs. You can further state that funding will be performance based--that is, you agree on the required level of skill improvement in a specified time and provide payment accordingly. You can provide incentives for higher levels of skill gains. You can also stipulate performance in terms of job related skills, not grade level completions or performance on academic based tests. In short, you can change the rules of the game.

You could institute similar changes in the JTPA programs, and all programs funding literacy services, including adult basic education. By doing this you will be helping to build the required infrastructure for literacy.

When you identify the tools available, you also identify the funding possibilities. These include the JTPA program, including the Governor's set aside, vocational education, ABE, the Family Support Act, VISTA, Libraries, private sector and foundations. From the policy makers point of view, all these funding streams can be used and leveraged with program standards and training requirements on the one hand and outcome requirements on the other. New state appropriations or private sector contributions can be used as glue and as incentives to bring agencies and programs together to assess the literacy issue. In designing this aspect of the policy strategy, points to remember are:

1) Identify all programs available to the state for funding literacy efforts.
2) Develop a plan for integrating all available funds into a state literacy system.
3) Create public-private efforts to involve the private sector as well.

But how do we do this? How can we leverage these resources? Who will actually do this work? To leverage the tools and funds and target resources we need to think about a central home or institutional base for literacy. In only a few states is this issue being addressed head on. If we are to meet the goal of a literate nation, each state will have to take similar action.

To build our infrastructure, we need to identify or create an organizational entity under the direct control of the Governor that can rise above program distinctions and disagreements, set standards for quality literacy programs, create a system of accountability across programs, develop means of attracting and retaining adult learners, and provide training and professional development opportunities for program staff. We need an agency with authority, not just license to coordinate.

And we need broader action as well to create this part of the infrastructure. We need a state literacy office to work with employers, unions and labor leaders to create conditions in the employment setting conducive to skill enhancement. In choosing a state home for literacy, remember to choose an institutional home where the literacy effort is essential to the achievement of other state or institutional goals...and to centralize within this institution responsibility for program and funding coordination, targeting, reorientation of existing programs, program improvement, staff training and performance evaluation.

Agencies designed just to coordinate programs at the state level are simply not up to the task at hand. To be able to leverage resources and build the infrastructure, we need an organizational entity with authority to act and commitment to meet the goals.

So, we have gotten this far. We've defined and estimated and targeted. We've retained adult learners, marshalled resources and found a home for literacy in the state. What's the next bite of this elephant?

STEP 4: CREATING PROGRAM STANDARDS

When considering retention rates, speed of learning and learning gains, we still can demonstrate very limited gains in most of our programs. Part of the problem of course is that we have still not settled on meaningful way to measure success. But the larger reason why we cannot demonstrate

practically significant learning gains is that we at the state level have not developed articulated expectations for program performance and have not developed a system for systematically sharing elements of best practice with literacy providers.

Too many programs are still operating independently, without the benefit of knowledge gained by research and practice. There is a knowledge base that could guide the development of a set standards for practice. What good is it without an infrastructure to make this transition? We're seeing better progress in the private sector than in the states as a whole. For example, you might look at some of the work Larry Mikulecky and Benita Somerfield are doing with the banking industry.

Based on knowledge of standards already available in programs and from research, we still need to develop program standards. We as policy makers must attend to the task of developing program design--at least to be sure that our programs are designed to meet state goals, are targeted to the needs of learners and tailored to their needs, are based on the best information available on how and what to teach, and are accountable to learners and policymakers.

No policy process is complete if it doesn't address the issue of the effectiveness of the policy.

STEP 5: ASSESSING EFFECTIVENESS

As I mentioned before, we in the literacy business still have not settled on a meaningful way to measure success. But we have more options now. Both Mississippi and Oregon, which we discussed earlier, have developed assessment instruments to estimate the literacy skills and needs of their populations. These tests are based on the assessment instrument used by the Educational Testing Service in its National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) of 18 - 24 year olds done in 1986. These tests can be adapted for use by literacy providers to measure progress in acquiring skills. The important factor to remember is to choose assessment processes and instruments that measure what is being taught and progress toward meeting state goals.

We need assessment for several reasons:

1) Documenting learner progress;
2) Program accountability;
3) Policymaking;
4) Research.

As policymakers, we need to be clear about these different reasons for assessing performance and design different instruments to address each.

There is a final step--one which is not usually considered part of the policy making process. But, in the case of literacy, it is essential.

STEP 6: CREATING A LITERACY PROFESSION

We have no literacy profession in this country and it appears to me that we are still no closer to having one than we were several years ago. We have lots of people working in the field. We have a growing amount of resources devoted to the problem. We are having more conferences. You might assume that there actually is a profession, or you might conclude that worrying about a profession ought to be last on our list of priorities.

But at the risk of collective despair, let me just review for you the current state of affairs:

- Too many programs still lack the common frame of reference of best practices;

- Too many programs still lack quality standards for what happens in the classroom;

- Too many programs are still low budget items with limited resources for staff development, training, instructional materials and self-evaluation;

- We still offer low levels of compensation to literacy staff with no career paths;

- Administrative staff is too often part-time with other responsibilities which eclipse the literacy agenda;

- In too many states we still have a limited network for information sharing, although there has been considerably more movement in this area than in others;

- All too often our state funded and volunteer programs are generic in nature rather than directed to specific and quantifiable goals shared by the learner;

- Finally, we provide little to no support -- other than verbal -- for learning the most effective teaching methods.

Addressing these issues will have to be on the agenda of any state serious about taking on the literacy issue. Solutions to these problems will form the buildings and roads and bridges of our infrastructure. But they are also the issues that a profession should be addressing. In the best sense, a profession seeks to advance the state of the art, create conditions which attract persons into the field, set standards for practice, and insure quality.

To create a profession we must concentrate our efforts in three areas:

1. Building into our literacy programs requirements for in- and pre-service training and the capacity for supporting and improving information dissemination, research and development.

2. Adopting standards for practice across all programs and retraining all existing program staff in these standards. Research should be promoted to upgrade practice in the field.

3. Providing resources to teachers and administrators for training and professional development. This includes increasing levels of compensation. I suggest we do this by providing salary increases for all providers who have gone through orientation and training in these standards and who commit to in-service training and a program of professional development. We should require that programs provide paid time off for professional development and build into each program budget funds to support staff training and development. We can also experiment with multi-year funding for literacy providers to permit the amortization of equipment costs and take into account the fact that skill enhancement is often a multi-year process.

To build a profession, we should focus on creating a cadre of staff not owned by any one program or literacy faction, who can work across programs. We should think in terms of using programs to pool resources to hire full time teachers, acquire needed equipment, and develop materials.

Addressing these issues of building a profession are vital to the ultimate effectiveness of any state literacy strategy.

Now we've made it to the tail of the elephant. But, in the great traditions of Eastern philosophy, the tail has become the head and we are 'round again to the task of defining the issue. As we begin to work through the steps again we see that the task has broadened. Defining the problem, which is where we started, is now more than defining literacy in the context

of other state goals. The problem is no longer simply the literacy needs of millions of adults--it is also the need for the creation of an infrastructure to address these needs.

We will find that working though this cycle again and again broadens our understanding of the issues at hand and gives us new insights into how powerful the tools of government can be in improving the literacy skills of our people.

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BASIC SKILLS IMPEDIMENTS TO COMMUNICATION BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND HOURLY EMPLOYEES*

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Communications in print form between management and hourly employees have taken on increased importance during the past few decades. Major communication difficulties have increased as a result of the combination of growing print demands in the work-place and lower basic skill levels among employees available for many hourly positions.

In developed countries, the workplace is rapidly becoming the major context for most adult literacy activities. By the late 1970's, survey research of adult reading habits had established that most American adults spent more time reading and writing in the workplace than they did anywhere else (Murphy, 1975; Mikulecky, Shanklin & Caverly, 1979).

During the 1980's research in linguistics and cognitive psychology began to redefine our understanding of what basic skills and literacy are. A common, but mistaken, early assumption was that literacy was a single ability and that a worker either had enough literacy or did not. In part, this assumption was true for a very low-level literacy. An individual reading below a third-grade level would not be able to decode words or determine the words that make up a sentence. When one reaches slightly higher levels, however, additional abilities are needed to understand and use print. Successful comprehension becomes a mixture of an ability to decode words, an ability to think and draw inferences, and a familiarity with the topic being discussed. Recent research on adult reading abilities (Kirsh & Jungeblut, 1986) indicates that there is less than 25% shared variance between the ability to read and use information from prose paragraphs and the ability to read and use information from documents and forms. This is because reading different types and forms of material calls for different skills and abilities. Literacy is not a single construct.

This new understanding of literacy makes simple discussion of the topic somewhat difficult. To a few people, basic literacy still means sounding out words at a low elementary school level. Basic has been redefined by changes, however. Most researchers now refer to much more difficult

*Dr. Mikulecky's comments previously appeared in *Management Communication Quarterly*, vol 3, No. 4, May 1990.

literacy tasks as being basic to continued functioning in developed societies. In this article basic literacy refers to the print-communication skills and strategies basic to independent functioning and learning in the workplace. This means decoding, as well as drawing inferences and conclusions from fairly complex material in a wide range of formats. It involves reading, writing, editing, and recognizing patterns in manuals, graphs, computations, correspondence, print-outs, and on CRT screens. These "basic" skills and strategies appear to have increased and are in flux as demands in the workplace continue to be in flux.

INDICATIONS OF A GROWING PROBLEM

In the early 1980's, there were several indications from industry that the education levels of new and existing workers were inadequate. The Center for Public Resources (Henry & Raymond 1982) reports survey from the returns of 184 businesses from the following industries; finance/credit, mining/manufacturing, services, utilities, and insurance. Returns usually came from personnel officers or human resource directors with data enabling them to respond to detailed survey questions. Henry and Raymond report that an additional 150 companies indicated that the issue of skill deficiencies was a serious human resource concern, but they did not possess enough specific data to assess the nature and level of the problem. According to Henry and Raymond, (1982):

> *Over 65% of responding companies note that basic skill deficiencies limit the job advancement of their high school graduate employees, and 73% responded that deficiencies inhibit the advancement on nongraduates.* (p.23)

Survey Questions	% of Respondents
Secretaries having difficulty readingat the level required by the job.	30%
Managers and supervisors unable to write paragraphs free of mechanical errors.	50%
Skilled and semi-skilled employees including bookkeepers unable to use decimals and fractions in math problems.	50%

Though concerned about general productivity, survey respondents were even more concerned about costly one-time mistakes resulting from low basic print-communication skills. Examples reported by employers in-

clude workers accidentally killed because of the inability to read safety communications on warning signs, costly mistakes made because of the inability to comprehend correspondence, and take time lost because of the need to give regular lectures on the use of equipment rather than being able to rely on step-by-step written instructions. (p,18)

The Wall Street Journal (Hymonwitz, 1981) cited industry reports that indicate increased economic problems resulting from workers who are unable to meet basic skills demands of their jobs. William Barnes, vice president of finance at JLG Industries, reported that "poorly educated workers are our no. 1 problem, the main factor slowing our growth" (p.1) JLG Industries, reported having spent over $1 million to correct worker literacy communication mistakes. Similarly, Mutual of New York reported that "an estimated 70% the insurance firm's correspondence must be corrected for retyped at least once." Concerns regarding the safety of workers who cannot read warnings and follow written directions have been issues in a growing number of court cases and have lead to several firings at Westinghouse Electric Corp's defense gear plant in Sunnyvale, California (Hymowitz, 1981).

> ***"...reading different types and forms of material calls for different skills and abilities. Literacy is not a single construct"***

In addition to the newspaper indications of the safety and economic costs of worker literacy mistakes, some initial work has attempted to estimate the cost of literacy communications problems to society in general and to business in particular. Kozol (1985) had attempted to draw broad inferences on the national cost to the United States of functionally illiterate adults. He estimates a cost of $20 billion in the United States with another $237 billion lost in the lifetime earnings forfeited by men 25-30 years old who have less than high school-level skills. The Canadian Business Task Force on Literacy (1988) surveyed Canadian expert opinion and made projections from known costs to estimate illiteracy costs to Canadian business at 4 billion dollars annually for business in the United States.

No systematic attempt has been made, however, to determine the cost of print-communication problems in terms of:

- accidents and mistakes;
- lost worker time by workers avoiding print and seeking oral information;

and

- lost manager time in terms of repeating oral explanations.

INCREASES IN BASIC SKILLS COMMUNICATIONS DEMANDS

Literacy demands in the workplace have increased significantly. During the first decennial census undertaken in 1790, not more than 10% of jobs required reading and writing abilities (Tyler, 1978). Current research indicated that written communications in the workplace are ubiquitous and at a relatively high level. Diehl and Mikulecky (1980) examined 100 workers for a representative cross section of occupations ranging from executive vice president to forklift driver. Only 2% of occupations examined required no reading and writing. Time spent reading print, charts, graphs, and computer terminals averaged nearly two hours daily. Difficulty levels of 70% of running prose reading materials on the job ranged from 9th-to 12th grade levels (Mikulecky, 1982). Nearly every civilian and military study cited here indicates average difficulty levels of job-related print to be the high school level or above. Though having a wealth of background knowledge on a topic can tend to lower reading difficulty by the equivalent of a few grade levels, the heaviest job-related reading is performed by new workers learning new jobs (Kern, 1985). New workers are the least likely to have a wealth of background experience. This expectation of heavy reading for new workers is a dramatic change from earlier times when one out of 10 workers performed the literacy tasks for others.

One indication of the changes in print-communication skills required to participate in society is the changing nature of work in the United States and other industrialized countries. As new jobs are created and old jobs disappear, new levels and types of print-communications skills for employment are also created.

Fields, Hull, and Sechler (1987) interviewed industry trainers and supervisors in seven industrial case studies to determine changed basic skills requirements and how industry was meeting those requirements. Two manager observations from these case studies graphically capture the impact of basic skill and information-processing changes for low-and middle-level workers. In describing changes for low-level workers, a manager observed:

> *Materials handlers are the guys that pick up boxes and move them from here to over there. Twenty-five years ago...you hired people with muscles...All you needed to do was lift...and be honest. Easy to hire. Now those guys -same guys, same job grade, same badges, muscles*

> *are a little weaker- sit in chairs and run computers that monitor automated warehouses. And they keep real-time inventories; they do real-time quality control...And they've got a much more important role in the management of the operation intellectually than they ever did...and that's what's happening all across jobs. Grunt jobs are turning into head jobs.* (p.35)

The increased demands have impact well beyond the "grunt" jobs described by the first manager. A second manager notes that the same phenomenon occurs with middle-level jobs.

This is a whole group of people who in the past thirty years have made it into the working middle class with only marginal cognitive skills. Their inferencing is weak, their generalization weak. Those are reading skills the new jobs call [for]. You have to be able to read data, synthesize it, and predict trends...The general education course in the 1950s...did not give [them] an adequate base for the kind of work that is done in the work place today. (p.36)

Johnston and Packer (1987), in Workforce 2000, have performed a more systematic analysis of the language, reasoning and mathematics skills ratings of jobs that are in decline and jobs that are on the increase. They reported that:

> *only four percent of the new jobs can be filled by individuals with lowest levels of skills, compared to 9 percent of jobs requiring such low skills today. At the other end of the scale, 41 percent of the new jobs will require skills ranked in one of the top three categories compared with only 24 percent that require such proficiency at present. (p.99)*

These projections indicate that it will be increasingly difficult for workers in developed nations to find adequate employment in jobs that require a very low level of print-communication skills. In addition, a significant percentage of existing middle-level workers will need to increase their skills as their jobs change or increase in difficulty.

There are a few exceptions to the general trend of higher literacy requirements in the workplace. For example, some low-paying jobs can be simplified through fragmentation and automation. In West Germany, cost-effectiveness has sometimes been achieved by breaking down complex tasks into simple tasks to be done repeatedly by an individual worker. This method is not as cost-effective as having a worker who is literate and can adjust flexibly to new tasks when the operation for which he or she has been

trained is temporarily halted. However, fragmentation can be cost-effective if the worker is paid an extremely low wage, as are the immigrant "guest workers" in West German industries.

In the United States, where no legal guest worker option exists, fragmented jobs tend to be shipped out of the country, leaving Americans with low literacy abilities without employment. Some fast-food chains in the United States have eliminated the need for much literacy among entry-level employees by using pictures on cash-register keys and computerized pricing. A trained manager must be knowledgeable and available in the event of equipment difficulties, but the system works as long as less capable workers can accept low pay for their severely limited performances. Similar approaches are being used in the automating of oil-pipeline monitoring gauges and holographic package readers in grocery stores.

The grocery store example is useful for examining this low-skill job trend. Automated pricing means fewer mistakes and faster lines, and therefore, fewer cash register operators and baggers to check prices. Computerized inventories also lower the need for massive warehousing and many of the warehouse jobs. Many low-skilled jobs disappear while a few are created. Several more middle-skilled-level jobs are created for building, marketing, and servicing the holographic price readers. (Haste & Mikulecky, 1984)

WHO CAN AND CANNOT MEET OCCUPATIONAL LITERACY DEMANDS

Several national assessments of adult and adolescent literacy and communication abilities have been performed during the 1970s and 1980s in the United States and Canada. Items from these studies allow us to draw inferences about proportions of the population likely to experience difficulty with basic communications requirements in the workplace.

The Adult Performance Level study (Northcutt, 1975) included several items similar to workplace print-communication tasks. Of the cross section of adults in the study, from 20-44% were unable to perform literacy and computation tasks similar to many workplace demands.

The general magnitude of the APL results was supported by other major functional literacy studies of the 1970s. These included the Survival Literacy Study (Louis Harris and Associates, 1970), the Adult Functional Literacy (Gadway & Wilson, 1974) and military reports from Project REALISTIC (Sticht et al, 1972).

In 1986 the United States National Assessment of Educational Progress released a major study of the functional literacy abilities of 21-to-25 year-old young adults (Kirsch & Jungeblutt, 1986). This study designed items based on what research indicated were reading tasks encountered by a substantial proportion of adults. Tasks involved the ability to use documents, forms, and charts as well as correspondence, newspapers, manuals, and books. More than 3,600 randomly selected adults were tested in their homes by more than 500 trained interviewers. The result is a study that is the most accurate available estimation of what young adults can capably read.

Like the APL study, the NAEP study did not directly address workplace communication skill demands. Some items from the NAEP study, however, closely resemble workplace communication demands and provide a sense of what proportion of the population can and cannot meet those demands. The NAEP results paint a picture of large percentages of the adult population having difficulty with the sorts of literacy skill demands present in many lower-and middle -level jobs.

A few observations about the results are in order. When viewing percentages of the total 21 to 25 year-old population, it appears clear that there is not a large degree of basic illiteracy. Over 95% of young adults can perform rudimentary literacy tasks such as those listed in Table 2.

For slightly more complex tasks, however, a good many young adults fail. For example, nearly one-third of young adults could not perform tasks similar to the basic skills present in many service and production jobs. Such tasks for the NAEP are listed in Table 3.

More than half of those 21-25 years old could not perform complicated, multistep occupational literacy tasks. These are the sorts of problem-solving uses of basic skills and communication that are increasingly a part of many jobs. Samples of such tasks drawn from the NAEP are listed in Table 4.

In short, more than half of young adults cannot successfully complete information-processing tasks that are comparable to tasks in growing service and technical occupations.

The Canadian "Southam Study" (Calamai, 1987) used these same items plus some additional Canadian items. Canadian results and those of the U.S. study overlap to a considerable extent. Canadian young adults slightly outperform U.S. young adults on mathematical items but do less well on items calling for reading comprehension.

RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISPARITIES IN PERFORMANCE

The reported performance of young adults in the United States and Canada can be somewhat deceptive because the totals are for average performance. The NAEP and Southam studies do not report data by socioeconomic status, but do report data by racial, geographic, and ethnic groups.

There are wide racial and ethnic differences in the young adult data. In the United States, NAEP data (Kirsch & Jungeblut, 1986) indicate that it is probable that 98% of whites could fill in a job application, but only 82% of blacks and 92% of Hispanics would be able to successfully complete the same task. Though a vast majority of all ethnic populations can accomplish basic literacy tasks, gaps in populations become wider as the complexity of the tasks increases. For example, data indicate that 22% of whites would have difficulty writing a letter to state that an error was made in billing. On the same item, 60% of blacks and 42% of Hispanics would be likely to have difficulty. Test date indicate that 35% of whites would have difficulty following directions to travel from one location to another using a map. On the same item, 80% of blacks and 63% of Hispanics have difficulty.

In Canada, the same disparate pattern of performance can be seen in differences between higher English-speaker performance than the French-speaker performance. Because French speakers took the test in French, the performance difference cannot be attributed to second language problems. Atlantic Province young adults also scored at levels significantly below Canadian averages. There is a clear pattern indicating that groups performing at lower levels on the Canadian and U.S. assessments are from the groups having lower-than-average socioeconomic status. In the United States, this parallels ethnicity. In Canada, lower performance parallels geographic location or one's first language.

Substantial numbers of young adults from the rapidly growing lower-income strata of society are ill-equipped for the high and ever-increasing communications demands of most jobs. Demographic projections suggest this problem will grow worse. Johnston and Packer (1987) estimate that nonwhites, the groups for whom the United States' education system performs the least well, will constitute 29% of the net additions to the U.S. work force between 1985 and 2000. At the same time, the overall number of young adults available for the workplace will continue to drop until near the end of the twentieth century. This means that employers will find screening for jobs a more costly endeavor. Individuals with acceptable skill levels will be much less available. To simply fill positions, employers

are increasingly forced to hire and deal with larger percentages of undereducated workers.

CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF THE PROBLEM

The cost estimates of low literacy and communication skills among employees vary considerably but are universally high. The validity of one figure compared to others is currently impossible to gauge without extensive focused research. Some indications of costs in human terms can be derived from a variety of sources. Table 5 lists examples of expensive and dangerous literacy communication problems reported by employers and employees to this author in the United Stated and to Dr. Maurice Taylor in Canada.

These examples were reported to researchers in confidence by workers and supervisors with the understanding that anonymity would be maintained. Both employers and employees were concerned about repercussions if workplace literacy and communication problems were openly acknowledged.

BANKING: A SINGLE INDUSTRY EXAMPLE

Additional costs of limited print-communication skills result from workers who are unable to comprehend training materials. Nearly every industry has increased training budgets during recent years. Costs include payment for instruction and often payment for workers salaries during training. As growing numbers of workers enter training with low print-communication skills, significant resources are wasted because these workers do not seem to benefit greatly from training they cannot understand.

Many industries are responding to this problem by incorporating basic skills instruction into the overall mix of industry training. The banking industry hires many entry-level employees and has a strong training tradition. The American Bankers Association (Mikulecky, 1989) has recently completed a survey of 391 banks across the United States to determine the extent to which supervisors and human resource directors perceive basic skills difficulties to be a growing problem among employees.

The ABA survey asked respondents to list jobs in which workers displayed basic skills problems. Nearly 90% of the jobs listed were entry-level jobs with the top five being:

- teller,
- bookkeeper,

- customer service representative,
- secretary, and,
- loan clerk.

More than one in five employees in these jobs were reported by supervisors as experiencing basic skills problems. In addition, the turn-down rate for new applicants with inadequate basic skills increased by 5% in the past three years.

Currently, 38% of surveyed banks report providing basic education programs and spending 22.8 % of their training budgets on such programs. This averages more than $25,000 annually for banks providing such training programs. Most of this basic skills training is provided by the banking industry itself with 37% provided by internal departments and 36% provided by the American Institute of Banking.

Print-communication skills ranked high among the problem areas listed by the survey respondents. A sampling of identified problem areas is shown in table 6.

Subsequent to the survey of supervisors, the author interviewed and observed bank employees performing basic tasks identified as problem tasks for less able employees. The task analysis revealed that a variety of basic skills abilities are called for in performing many banking tasks. Workers can make mistakes because of low experience and ability in any one of a string of subtasks they need to perform. For example, it is not unusual for a bank employee to be asked to transfer funds from a savings to a checking account.

When examining the Literacy Task Analysis below, consider the persons who are being asked to perform these tasks. Many bank employees are high school graduates who elect not to attend college or further professional training. They come from the bottom third of their graduating classes and may not have fully mastered the reading, writing, oral, and caculating abilities called for in the tasks listed below. Many have had little or no previous experience in listening carefully, taking notes, making sense of tabular information on screens, and being able to summarize bank policy for customers. Consider the two basic banking skills task analysis below.

Transferring funds from savings to checking:

Taking phone calls in a professional manner.
Recognizing tasks(identifying key terms and problems).
Taking notes from phone calls.
Skimming computer screen for organization and topic.

Comparing notes to computer screen for name, account number, etc.
Reading computer screen for new information.
Taking notes from computer screen.
Summarizing information for customer.
Filling out forms accurateley.

Correcting balance sheet errors:
Recognizing tasks(identifying key terms and problems).
Skimming computer print out and teller balance sheet for organization and topic.
Comparing computer print out to teller balance sheet.
Highlighting amounts that don't match.
Calculating correct amounts.
Writing correct amounts on forms(tickets, tapes, balance sheets).

Banks have traditionally screened carefully to find workers who could perform tasks like those above. Increasingly, however, banks must compete with other service industries for the very best workers. The competition for skilled workers is already rigorous in many areas and will grow more rigorous. As a result, the banking industry is investing more in training.

The topic of training has also become more complex. Training has become very expensive and it grows increasingly clear that a single type of training is not effective with all workers. Workers with different levels of basic skills respond differently to traditional training.

MULTISTRAND APPROACHES

There appear to be at least three major print-communication problem areas in the workplace - each calling for a slightly different solution. These problem areas relate to:

1. Extreme low-level literacies (i.e., those unable to function independently with simple print).

2. Workers who can read at a moderate level(i.e., as high as the sports page), consider themselves to be literate, but derive little benefit from expensive training because of insufficient reading, computing, and study abilities.

3. Workers at nearly all ability levels who make some job-related literacy mistakes that influence safety, productivity, and promotability.

The first problem area (low-level literates) is the area involving the smallest number of workers(below 5%) and is yet formost in the public mind. Surveys of corporate literacy training indicate that approximately 10-25% of businesses fund basic education training for low-level literates and that this percentage may be increasing (Lusterman, 1977; Mikulecky & Cousin, 1982). Training ranges from in-plant basic education programs (Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1987) to funding for employees to attend community basic skills education and GED classes.

The second problem area (i.e., low basic skills that limit training effectiveness) is less recognized but effects a larger percentage of workers. The vast majority of workers in many industries hold high school diplomas and do not perceive themselves as having print-communication difficulties. Management demands for increased training and performance, however, often reveal that worker self perceptions are inaccurate. For example, a recent survey of a manufacturing concern (Mikulecky, 1988) revealed that over a half million dollars was spent on yearly training for 700 employees. For hourly employees, most of whom had graduated from high school, training involved taking specialized courses from a local technical college. Nearly 20% of hourly employees were unable to meet the technical college's minimal reading and mathematics entrance requirements (approximately an eighth grade level of achievement). Most of these workers considered themselves to have no literacy problems, but their tested reading and mathematical abilities were below minimum levels needed for succesful ongoing training. Further, both technical college and in-plant instructors commented upon the marginal benefits of training and mastery of skills for workers who did pass minimum entry standards, but just barely. Without adequate print-communication skills, workers do not tend to learn new material very well. One in as many as four or five hourly workers may be ill-prepared to benefit from required technical training.

The third area of print-communication problems (i.e., literacy mistakes related to safety, productivity, or promotability) can happen at any education level. They are sometimes the result of unfamiliarity with formats, specialized technical vocabulary or complexities and ambiguities present in new print materials. Literacy task analysis or literacy audits of key job task may be required to determine the extent to which the literacy-based mistakes are endangering lives or costing money (Mikulecky, 1988; U.S. Department of Education and Labor, 1988). Henry and Raymond(1982) identify literacy-related safety mistakes to be the major literacy problem reported by employers. Literacy-related mistakes also relate to productivity problems and inability to implement new productivity innovations. New York Mutual Life reported having to redo 70% of correspondence in the early 80's (Henry & Raymond, 1982).

Most work sites experience all three of the foregoing problem areas. It is unlikely that a single approach will solve all problems. What is called for is a multistrand approach. Such an approach offers varying solutions to varying problems.

The most prevalent strand is designed for the low-level literates. Such workers need long-term support to improve their basic skills. It may take several hundred to a thousand hours before a worker who can barely read a product label is able to troubleshoot using a manual for computerized equipment. For comparison, consider that a child spends nearly 9,000 hours in school moving from the fourth grade to the tenth grade. Adult learning is more rapid but still time-consuming. Economic support for basic education is one way that the employers can help provide such long-term support. Some employers also offer in-plant basic skills programs with time contributed by both the employer and the worker. Such programs have the advantage of making workplace materials more easily accessible to instructors and communicating to workers the value management places upon a capable work force.

The second literacy workplace program strand is directed toward middle-level literates who are ill-equipped for technical training. The needs of these workers can often be addressed by integrating basic skills training with technical training. Technical schools and in-plant instructors can organize class periods to briefly teach such study skills as text book use or how to take notes related to the technical material covered. Such instruction can be managed in 10 to 15 minute sessions in which the instructor demonstates how to take notes or gather key information from a text. Technical instructors can also be taught to make use of the host of tested ideas available to content-area reading specialists(i.e., developing study guides, preteaching key concepts, individualized assignments, alternate readings). The implication here is clearly that trainers working with the bottom 25% of the work force may need to receive some retraining in their own right.

The final workplace literacy training stand is directly related to local safety and productivity issues. It implies a careful analysis of key workplace tasks involving basic skills and is likely to lead to custom designed materials and training. Such analysis may identify areas where workers need training. Other analysis may reveal documents that need to be redesigned, or job descriptions that need to be rewritten. Several suggestions for how to develop such a strand have appeared in print(Mikulecky, 1985; Cornell,

1988; Drew & Mikulecky, 1988; U.S. Department of Education and Labor, 1988). All involve some form of on site analysis and diagnosis of the tasks, strategies, and materials needed to perform competently.

MODIFYING LITERACY DEMANDS VIA JOB PERFORMANCE AIDS

In addition to training it is possible to narrow the gap between print-communication demands and skill levels by modifying demands. Some print-communication problems are the result of poorly written documents or mistaken reliance on memos as training and job guides. One can restructure information so that it is more accessible and comprehensible to workers. The restructured information, designed to help workers perform tasks, is often called a "job performance aid."

Job performance aids(JPAS) are typically based on a task analysis of job steps. Though they vary in format(i.e., checklists, flowcharts, step-by-step instructions, computerized guidance), they all are designed to improve job performance and lower the time needed for training. Initial research addressing the effectiveness of JPAS was predominantly performed in the military.

The effectiveness of job performance aids has been documented by a number of studies. Elliot and Joyce (1971), for example, found that high school students with 12 hours of training in how to use a job performance aid for diagnosing electrical problems were able to spot errors at a level comparable to fully trained technicians with an average of seven years experience. Kammann (1975) found that an algrithmic (or flowchart) format increased comprehension and reduced errors and reading time. Swezey (1977) reports that high-aptitude workers using job aids significantly outperformed high-aptitude workers using traditional print materials. Medium-aptitude workers using job aids outperformed high-aptitude workers without job aids on some measures through performance by the two groups were the same on other measures.

Mockavak (1981) and Smillie (1985) report on several studies that suggest that workers prefer training built around the use of job aids and that the job aids encourage increased use of training manuals after training is completed. Johnson, Thomas, and Martin (1977) report that 78.7% of the military technicians trained in the use of job aids liked the job aids better than the manuals they replaced. Though over half of the technicians reported that they would be irritated if they were required to use job aids for every job, 58% preferred job aids for nonroutine jobs.

Existing research on job aids indicates that workplace print-communications problems can be addressed, in part, by modifying and developing new materials. Further examination of the effectiveness and limitations of job aids and restructure information in the workplace is clearly in

CONCLUSION

Print-communication demands in most businesses have increased. At the same time demographic and economic trends are forcing employers to hire employees with lower skill levels. These trends will continue well into the next decade.

Increasingly, businesses are recognizing the economic consequences of print-communication problems. A first step is realizing that there are a variety of types of problems that call for differing solutions. A few workers need long-term support to move from virtual illiteracy to productive skill levels. Many more workers need to have basic skills training integrated with regular job training if training is to be effective. Finally, industries are increasingly focusing upon areas where mistakes are made or promotion is blocked. In such areas, solutions range from short-term targeted training to redesigned documents and job performance.

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The 1980 U.S. Census reported that 7.8% of the state's adult population 25 years and older had fewer than five years of schooling, giving Louisiana a ranking of 50th among the fifty states.

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TECHNOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND LITERACY EXPECTATIONS

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Albuquerque, New Mexico

It seems to me that contemporary thinking about literacy education in America today is framed by two habits of thought. One is to wrestle with the literacy dilemma through the lenses of tragedy and the other is to conceive the drive toward literacy as a race. And further, it seems to me, neither habit lends much to resolving the problem.

It is almost unanimously accepted that there are at least 27 million illiterate adults in America today. There is also little doubt these days that the costs of this illiteracy have ramifications for the satisfying conduct of a life of self-esteem, for the full participation of all in the conduct of political and cultural life, and for the conduct of economic life both in the workplace and as it impacts the welfare system. One need only to meet and listen to those forced to confront their illiteracy, to their families, and to their employers to grasp the tragic dimensions of illiteracy. It is difficult for any thinking, caring person to fail to see tragedy in these stories. The concept of tragedy works when one reflects on the disastrous consequences of illiteracy, often eliciting both pity and a measure of terror. Thus, illiteracy as tragedy serves to motivate us to action, but it fails to shed any light on a course that directs action.

Enter next, the race. We have all read in the mass media about America's positions in the education race. For many, there is no mistaking it: education is a competitive race which, if won, will ensure economic and political supremacy in the global marketplace and in the domains of innovation and ideas. This race within which literacy takes center stage, however, presupposes that we know with certainty what the race course is, that we know where that course begins and where the finish line is. It also presupposes that everyone should run the same race and that we know the correct race to be running. Yet, the plethora of recent books highlights the lack of consensus on exactly what the race should be. Is it school literacy defined as a set of decoding, vocabulary, and comprehension skills or is it cultural literacy, scientific literacy, literary, geographic, and historic literacy, functional literacy, mathematical literacy (numeracy), computer literacy, or workplace literacy? If literacy is best seen as a race, where do

these varied race courses intersect? What are the best vehicles or strategies for running the race? In many ways, it seems to me, we as educators and concerned citizens are putting our energies into running a literacy foot race while the social system around us gallops past on the shoulders of technology. If it is a race we are running, I would like to suggest that we are doing an adequate job of running that race, and we are getting better at it each year. Rather, the problem, I think, is that we are running the wrong race.

I would like to pause for a moment here to relate a personal experience which highlighted the dilemma for me.

In 1973 while I was teaching in a middle school in a small Southwestern town, I received a call late one afternoon from the Human Services Department. My name had been given to them as a reading specialist, and the caseworker was in search of a tutor. One of her clients had been fired from his job as an auto mechanic for a local dealership. His name was Jim, and if I was available, they were willing to pay for tutorial services for up to one year. I told the caseworker that I had never worked with adults but would like to meet with Jim to see if we might be able to work together. We agreed that Jim would come to my house on Monday afternoon of the following week.

When Jim arrived, I asked him if he would be willing to share his story with me. It went something like this: Jim had been employed for over 10 years with the service department of a local automobile dealership. He was a successful, skilled mechanic with a natural knack for working on cars - a fact I can attest to because over our time together he helped me out with my aging car more than once. Jim had been happy with his employers and, apparently, his employers had been happy with him until they discovered Jim was unable to read. You see, the nature of his job had been changing over the previous five years.

It seems that Jim's job had demanded more and more paperwork as the dealership depended more and more on revenues from warranty work. And warranty work required the completion of very complex forms of accounting in which all work was listed, compared with a reimbursement schedule from the manufacturer, recorded by numeric and alphabetic descriptor chosen from a manual, and finally filed with the service manager for processing by office staff before being sent to the manufacturer for payment. It seems that Jim had a friend who helped cover the paperwork demands while Jim helped cover the actual mechanical work. This deal worked well until his friend accepted a job with a larger dealership in another town. Jim's illiteracy then became apparent, and he lost his job.

I'll never forget his frustration and anger. During that first meeting, Jim told me that people had been telling him for years that if he would just learn the alphabet he would be able to read. He grabbed paper and pencil and wrote the letters of the alphabet in order saying their names as he wrote. He was so angry that he pressed hard enough to leave indentations in my dining room table. Those marks are still there.

To make a long story short, Jim and I worked together for an hour and a half two days a week for almost a year. Jim's first discovery was that the sounds of the letters were more important than their names. Over the weeks, we worked on combining letters into words and words into sentences. I managed to get old warranty books, and we studied the organizational patterns of those manuals. We didn't neglect fiction either. Eleven months and one week later, Jim found employment with another dealership, and our sessions together ended. The last time I saw Jim he was carrying a Louis L'Amour novel but now he could read it. I left for California to work on my doctorate several months later and lost track of Jim. But I remembered our times together as wonderful moments where Jim discovered the symbols, processes, and organizational patterns associated with printed materials.

I was as satisfied by our experiences as Jim until I managed to own a car long enough for the warranty to run out. When you have work done on a car under warranty, it is shirked away from view, fixed, and miraculously returned to you. On the other hand, when you take a car to a local service

> ***"Getting meaning from or acquiring knowledge about the complex and rich information environment of the late 20th century rests on the ability to navigate all of these symbolic forms."***

station for work, you can watch through the window or, if the mechanic is friendly, stand by the car and watch. Several years ago, I found a mechanic willing to let me stand in the bay. I was shocked at what I saw! He opened my hood, attached a number of sensors in various places, turned his back on my car, and began pressing buttons on a large computer console. As I watched spellbound, he examined graphs, called up mathematical formulas, watched oscillating lines, and tapped into a database which called up visual images of automobile parts which could be rotated, enlarged, and examined. After twenty minutes, he disconnected all the wires, consulted a manual laying on the counter, went to a storage compartment and selected a box labeled as containing the correct part, reached into the engine compartment, removed a small integrated circuit encased in a two

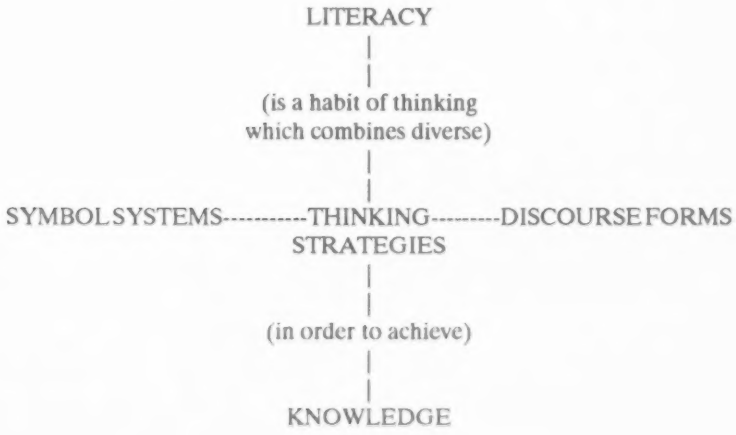
inch square, replaced the old with the new, and charged me $75.00. I was stunned. Not at the price, but at the process. I could only think - little that Jim and I had done together prepared him to work in the symbolic environment defined by that computer console.

Just as the technology of the warranty book had redefined the job of an auto mechanic years before, a new technology had transformed the work of the mechanic once again. This may seem at first glance like a very broad claim. Yet, understanding the consequences of technology amounts to more than understanding and manipulating the machine. Technology is not just the computer, the television, the automobile. Rather, technology, whose root word derives from the word for technique, is of no consequence in our lives except as we put it to use. And the act of putting technology to work results in the redefinition of human activity itself. The goal might remain raising a crop of corn, but the act of using the hoe and the act of using a tractor are two distinct activities requiring different competencies. Using a warranty manual and a computer console are equally distinctive. Jim was illiterate, then literate, and may well have become illiterate again.

The new information technologies are not only raising literacy expectations but demanding a new literacy - not exclusive of print but much reshaped. These technologies have resulted in a fundamental shift in the nature of the knowledge environment in which we live and work and in the nature of the habits of thought we use to navigate this environment. John Naisbitt in **Megatrends** warns that the new information technologies place us all in jeopardy of drowning in information while remaining starved for knowledge. These technologies create a world in which physically manipulating our environment gives way to reliance on manipulating symbols reflecting the world. Alvin Toffler in **Powershift** has stated that contemporary society is rapidly moving into a "super-symbolic" world where symbols represent little more than other symbols residing inside the memories and thoughtware of both people and the information technologies. The act of being literate - that is, to be able to derive knowledge from and participate fully in this symbolic world whether in the workplace specifically or the culture more generally requires capabilities and activities beyond those which frame a predominantly print-oriented environment.

The shift from a print-oriented dependence to a wider array of symbolic environments does not mean, however, that we should "throw the baby out with the bathwater." Much of what we have learned in the long years of striving for widespread literacy suggests a framework for conceptualizing literacy in the "super-symbolic" age of the information technologies.

Jim's story may serve as a metaphor for reconceptualizing what it means to be literate. During the eleven months of our work together, Jim and I focused on three foundational areas familiar to all who study and/or teach literacy: how alphabetic symbols are used to represent ideas, what thinking strategies are useful in interpreting the message inherent in print symbols, and how broader patterns or discourse forms are used to organize printed information. I would like to look now at each one of these areas summarized by the following diagram.



LITERACY AS SYMBOLIC COMPETENCE, NOT JUST PHONICS

Beginning with our first session together, Jim and I began exploring how printed letters represent sounds and the rules which govern how those letters might be combined to form larger sound units or words. In the conventional literature on literacy, this is called phonics or decoding, and, in the linguistics literature, it is referred to as the study of graphology and morphology. This has long been considered the cornerstone of literacy development. Progress at first was rather slow, but as the logic of the system revealed itself, Jim began to grasp the rules which organized printed symbols and was soon generalizing those rules to an increasingly larger array of words. The lesson here is that knowledge, both intuitive and explicit, about how the printed symbol system works is a necessary foundation for literacy development. Increasingly, however, as the information technologies play a larger role in shaping the contemporary knowledge environment, printed symbols are joined by other systems of symbolic representation, and any comprehensive discussion and teaching

of literacy must expand to include knowledge about all the symbol systems humans use to represent what they have come to know.

Humans have developed and use a variety of symbol systems-graphics in the charts and graphs and oscillating computer images that clutter our lives; visual representation in the forms particularly of television, advertising, training videos, and films, mathematic symbols which frame all computer modeling and when misinterpreted lead to the wide array of misconceptions chronicled by such authors as John Paulos in his book **Innumeracy**; musical symbols which shape the mood and background atmosphere in combination with the visuals of television, film, and radio; and print which still plays a large role in the knowledge environment even though its nature changes. Each of these symbol systems functions as a means for both the conceptualization of ideas about aspects of reality and as a means for conveying what one knows to others. Each symbol system has unique capabilities and sets parameters upon what can be conceived and what can be expressed. Together, all of these symbol systems form the basis for grasping the content and structure of physical and theoretical systems and lead to the ability to construct meaning.

Getting meaning from or acquiring knowledge about the complex and rich information environment of the late 20th century rests on the ability to navigate all of these symbolic forms. As Howard Gardner wrote in ***Frames of Mind***, the ability to use these symbol systems marshals human cognitive potential and paves "the royal route from raw intelligences to finished cultures." Full participation in a world shaped by the information technologies necessitates the ability to understand and use wisely all of the symbol systems available. A few examples may help to better understand the role these diverse symbolic forms play in our lives.

- Two years ago, my younger brother needed to pass the California licensing exam for exterminators. He was given four weeks to study for that exam, and I called him at the end of the third to see how he was progressing. He assured me that he would pass. I remember saying to him, "you must have been spending the last three weeks doing a lot of manual reading." He informed me that he had not opened a manual. Rather, he had been handed a box of video tapes which contained all the information he would need both to pass the exam and to be able to supervise a team of exterminators. He related a recent on-site visit with a colleague and remarked, "you know, a bug on television is a lot different than a bug running across the floor." Visual symbols in a video environment require as much interpretation as printed symbols in a manual.

- I recently visited a medical lab where technicians were analyzing blood and tissue samples. Routine tests were being conducted with a series of assembly line-like strategies using some rather complex but mechanized instruments. While these tests were under way, the technicians were working on less common, more complex, specialized tests at a lab table on the other side of the room. As they worked, the background was filled with rhythmic tones and sequences emanating from the instruments completing the routine tests. All of a sudden, one technician left his workstation to attend to the more routine testing equipment. "Did you hear," remarked my guide. "Whenever an abnormal result is found, the rhythmic tones and sequences are replaced with discordant tones." "No," I admitted. My own inadequacy in responding to and understanding the appropriate pitches and relationships between pitches encoded as musical symbols left me unqualified for that job.

- My brother-in-law is an attorney, and when I visited his office over the holidays, I had the opportunity to watch the paralegal employed by his firm. She was sitting quietly in front of a computer terminal doing on-line research of a legal database to which the firm subscribed. I do not pretend to understand the legal jargon framed by the printed symbols she was using, but I did grasp the way in which she was using those printed symbols, and it did not follow the rules of printed syntax. Rather, she was combining and recombining a number of descriptors into mathematical formulas -- there was no subject, verb, object here. Thus, she queried, "give me all the precedents that refer to topic A and topic B but not topic C nor topic D." This is a boolean algebra, and access to the information she sought came not from reading text as we know it but by organizing symbols according to mathematical rules.

When Jim first began to work on his literacy, we focused on the symbol system of print, and he achieved a level of print literacy. When I observed the mechanic ten years later, the mechanic was using graphic symbols, mathematical formulas, and computer-based, visual diagrams of automobile engine parts as well as printed symbols. For Jim to be literate in that computer environment, he needed to know about all those symbolic forms, not just the printed form with which we had wrestled.

LITERACY AS A DIVERSE COLLECTION OF THINKING STRATEGIES, NOT JUST COMPREHENSION

As Jim mastered the rules governing alphabetic, printed symbols, he and I began to explore the ways in which those words might be combined into

sentences, paragraphs, subsections, and completed wholes to represent ideas taken first from Jim's direct environment and eventually moving into the domain of more abstract ideas not obviously connected to direct experience. This step is referred to within the literacy literature as comprehension and within the linguistics literature as syntax and semantics. Comprehension is usually characterized as a set of generalizable knowledge-acquisition skills necessary for extracting meaning from text, and the range of thinking strategies commonly associated with literacy includes identifying the main idea, locating supporting detail, detecting sequence, following printed directions, identifying cause-effect relations, and remembering what one has read. Seen as a whole, these strategies represent a habit of thinking applicable not only to print but as an attitude toward knowledge in general.

In print, information is abstracted from experience and organized in an unyielding left to right (in most languages), sentence-by-sentence order that requires thinking strategies which parallel that structure. These strategies require linear, sequential, propositional, analytical, objective, hierarchical and rational thinking. To navigate print, one needs to analyze information, breaking it down into pieces, identifying constituent parts, and then arranging them in logical order. The act of becoming literate in a print-oriented world is, thus, not only knowing how printed symbols work but also knowing how to employ these strategies. In fact, research among the Vai tribe of Liberia reported by Michael Cole and Sylvia Scribner in **The Psychology of Literacy** demonstrated that these strategies were a natural outcome of literacy development within the context of Western schooling. Additional research has demonstrated that teaching these thinking strategies directly leads to significant improvement in comprehension over groups not receiving direct instruction.

The visual information technologies (film, television, photography, and computer imaging) structure information about our experience of the world in a manner quite different from print. To navigate these information environments thus requires a very different set of thinking strategies. Visual information is not structured in a hierarchical but in a horizontal manner. Images do not lead the observer's thinking from A to B to C, with an objective conclusion as in print. Thinking is not directed to objective abstractions but to subjective feelings. Visual information presents us with a paradigm of how to think that is nondiscursive, presentational, impressionistic, subjective, emotive, and non-rational. Recognition of the whole is more important than identifying and chaining together the parts. Understanding in a visual environment bypasses to a large extent the language and print dominated centers of the left brain and taps the more intuitive, pattern-seeking centers of the right brain. Yet, full access to and

command of these strategies is as subject to learning as those of the print environment.

Computer technologies also restructure the thinking strategies we use to encode and decode experience. Working within a computer environment demands thinking even more abstract than print with concepts even more transitory and fleeting than images. A computer environment does not create certainties which can be extracted by following cause-effect, right/wrong, linear, or logical sequences. Instead, a computer environment is a complex system ruled by the grammar of mathematics. Elements of experience are coded using mathematical relationships, and output must be organized and interpreted by searching for connections and patterns. Knowledge gleaned within a computer environment is tentative, flexible, relational, probabilistic, and interactive. One must call not on analysis but on synthesis - that is, employing thinking strategies to grasp the complex relationships which constitute the whole.

As Jim and I worked each week on strategies for taking away meaning from text, I noticed a change in his thinking. He began to control his anger, not just about his illiteracy but as a more general approach to the contingencies of life in general. I watched with fascination as he began analyzing situations the way we had analyzed things we had read together. He began to make lists of positive and negatives, lists of similarities and differences, lists of possible alternatives. He began to challenge others' deductions, to look for flaws in logic, and to construct his own chains of thought. He was moving into the habits of thought associated with print literacy. Jim had learned to think in terms of if-then propositions and cause-effect relationships. Yet, the mechanic who had fixed my car had not depended on those thinking strategies as he examined my car. He had posited a number of what-if questions at the computer console. The program governing that system had not produced an answer that had only to be understood. It had merely provided him with a collection of information which he manipulated in order to assess a probability. He had not sought to draw a single conclusion from a fixed information environment. Instead, he had posited questions, examined possibilities, and the posited new questions. He was not an active reader but an interactive explorer.

LITERACY AS KNOWING VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERNS, NOT JUST ABOUT BOOKS

For Jim to successfully reenter the workplace of the dealership mechanic, he needed to know more than symbols and thinking strategies. He needed to know how information was organized within the covers of the warranty

manual and how he had to organize information on the forms demanded by the office staff and the manufacturer. In short, he had to know the discourse form unique to his profession. Together, we spent hours studying the manuals, simulating the process of completing forms based on hypothetical jobs. Jim constructed those scenarios since I knew nothing about auto mechanics. He would create an imaginary problem, imagine how it might be solved, and then we would turn to the manuals and forms exploring how they were organized, which sections held what information, and how that information was organized within the sections.

Just as the manuals revealed a specific discourse form, the new information technologies have their own unique information patterns. To be literate, to profit from these information environments, one must understand their organization and learn how to navigate each form in order to gain knowledge. Take, for instance, the nightly news programs. Ask yourself, what is the most important news story covered? Of course, the answer is the first or opening story. Here's the problem. The NBC nightly news program and ABC nightly news program often open with different stories. I have watched this discrepancy closely and finally determined that if two stories of import need to be reported, NBC will open with the international story and ABC will open with the national story. Concluding basic bias in authorship is but a short leap from there.

Television is not a passive, benign medium any more than books are. Television programming is a collection of diverse organizational patterns, such as, the news documentary, the situation comedy, the talk show, the drama, the soap opera. When one understands television as discourse, one understands that literacy education must include the workings of these forms just as one attends to the working of the textbook, the manual, the novel. Moreover, as Alvin Toffler has written in **Powershift**, to be truly employable one must share certain implicit understandings about things like time, dress, courtesy, money, causality, and language. And, he states, these generalized cultural skills do not come out of textbooks or training sessions alone. Rather, they presuppose a familiarity with how the world works and that kind of knowledge comes increasingly from the media, depending on our ability to both have access to that media and to be able to interpret that media.

Computer programs also create discourse forms. The word processor, for instance, regardless of which make of computer or which program all structure the writing environment in a similar way. The database program whether dBase3 or First Choice all structure information management in a similar way. In fact, any spreadsheet, any simulation, any hypermedia program all share a set of organizational patterns unique to themselves

just as all textbooks and all novels share organizational characteristics. Whether one is navigating the video environment, the book environment, the computer environment, capitalizing on the potentials of the information in that environment calls on one's ability to work within the frame of the discourse form. Three workplace examples may serve to point out the uniqueness of different computer discourse forms found in the training/ workplace environment.

- There is a computer-oriented discourse form called interactive fiction. For most people, this form is best known as computer games like *ZORK or THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE UNIVERSE*. In these games, the player(s) are responsible for mapping the setting, for investigating the characters' personalities, and for determining the progression of the story. Carla Reitter in a June, 1986 article in **Science 86** tells how this form of computerized fiction is being used to recreate real life situations for training the border patrol,emergency medical personnel, and police. She calls these environments "toy universes." They rest on the premise that after basic knowledge has been mastered it must be applied and that the application of knowledge is dependent on the unique characteristics of a particular event - an individual, unfolding story.

Having read about these toy universes, I sought out a group of instructional designers in Albuquerque who were building such a program for security personnel under contract with one of the national laboratories. Upon its completion, security guards were able to turn to a complex program to test their skills and knowledge related to handling security problems involved both with breaches of the security system and with hazardous waste materials. Sitting in front of a computer terminal, guards read brief descriptions of presenting problems which ended with the question, "What will you do now?" They then typed in a description of their actions. Instead of receiving a right or wrong response, they were presented with the consequences of their actions and asked to tell what they would do next. As they wrote the story around their responses, they were rewarded with descriptions of improving conditions upon which wise choices continued the improvement while a less adequate response might send the situation spiraling back into chaos.

The stories that the guards wrote were different than conventional story scenarios about security guards. In these stories, the guards were simultaneously reader and writer of the story; they were the main character -- the story was not about another abstract guard; the other characters in the story did not unfold as descriptions, rather characters were discovered in a series of encounters; and the guards were able to test the consequences of their personal knowledge as it might apply to a variety of situations. As

I watched several guards testing the program, they were at first quite frustrated. They were unfamiliar with the organization of the environment, not easily nor quickly able to enter the story and direct its course. While I did not have their expertise on security, I, as an interactive fiction player, was able to attend to clues and possibilities they did not see. When my knowledge of the discourse form combined with their knowledge of security, the collaborative effort led to much quicker progress. Had they understood the discourse form, my assistance would have been unnecessary.

- As I was watching the war in the Gulf unfold, I encountered a discussion about the young who came from the video game generation. A commentator stated that the military was discovering that those who had video game experience seemed to be best able to deal with the complexities of high-tech bombing missions. The commentator failed to understand, however, that this was the consequence not of having played numerous "shoot 'em up" games but was a signal that these young people had mastered the use of computer systems in which one had to respond to multiple forms of information - print, visual, auditory - rapidly and intuitively. Time for analysis is not present in either the video game or the bombing mission. These pilots understood the symbols, the thinking strategies, and the organizational patterns of high technology, information systems.

- Don Norman at the Center for Cognitive Studies, University of California, San Diego was asked to design a computer program that would teach an eight week basic course to new naval recruits. Upon the programs' completion, he moved into the testing phase. As he watched recruits using the computers, he discovered that their unfamiliarity with the organizational patterns and working of the system seemed to interfere with their learning. To test the hypothesis that understanding the computer first would lead to greater learning, he divided the recruits into two groups. The first group used the computers for an eight week period, covering the content in eight weekly segments. With the second group, Norman spent the first week teaching them about the organization of the computer program and then collapsed the eight week course into the seven remaining weeks. Post-testing showed that the group who first learned about the organization of the program scored significantly higher on tests covering the material to be learned than those who had actually spent eight weeks trying to learn the material.

TECHNOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND LITERACY

The lessons from Jim's story and the examples presented throughout this paper speak clearly to me. If literacy is oriented toward the goal of preparing each of us to learn from and productively use symbolized information and to become knowledgeable about the world we live in, we must know the larger patterns of organization within which that information is presented. Our public schools need to teach about and engage students with literacy and learning that is not defined by only print-oriented literacy definitions of phonics, comprehension, and the book form but by a recognition that what we know about print-oriented literacy can form the basis for an expanded conception of literacy more in line with the demands of a socio-cultural environment increasingly framed by the information technologies. Every classroom must have computers, televisions, books, and phone lines so that students can learn literacy relevant to all the information environments. Our literacy volunteer programs need to reach beyond traditional reading and writing to include knowledge about a multiplicity of symbol systems, about a menu of possible thinking strategies from which one can make wise choices, and about a broader array of organizational forms used throughout both the workplace and the culture as a whole. Simple activities which engage students in comparing and contrasting stories they read with movies made about the same stories allow students to identify how a lowering of lights and a zoom out function to communicate the passage of time just as the words "later", "the next day", or "waking up in the morning" signify a transition in time. Our libraries must order, shelve, and make available not only books but videos and computer programs. Workplace training programs must resist the temptation to use the information technologies only as a vehicle for drill and practice systems that teach print-oriented literacy activities. Rather, workplace training must assess the ways in which the information technologies frame workplace activities and teach employees to be literate in those environments. Learning to read a software manual does not transfer to being able to productively use a computer environment.

I do not know what happened to Jim. But I do know that if he were to once again appear at my home to work on literacy, what we would do would be similar in goal and structure but very different in form for both my world and Jim's is a very different one from that of 1973. Literacy is not, after all, a race with a clearly defined course and an identified starting and finishing line. It is a life-long process which improves each time we wrestle with symbolized information. It is a collection of habits of thinking which lead to human knowledge about the physical, social, and psychological condition of being human. It is human activity within a cultural context which today includes the information technologies as well as printed matter.

Each time we invent a new technology, we simultaneously invent new expectations.

Dr. Priscilla Norton *is an associate professor with the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. She is the author of numerous articles including* **A Study of Literacy in New Mexico**, *(with Altweiger, Maggart, Oritz, and White, 1986) and* **Breaking the Cycle of Illiteracy**, *(1988). She has been a presentor for many conferences and seminars in New Mexico, California, Arizona, and Texas. Since 1985, she has functioned as the co-cordinator of the APS/UNM Collaborative Graduate Intern Program.*

The 1980 U.S. Census revealed that 43% of the state's adult population 16 years of age and older had less than a high school education and were not enrolled in school. In addition, Louisiana has the highest reported school dropout rate in the nation.

From *Louisiana Literacy Resource Guide*,
Louisiana Office of Literacy, April, 1991

BUT IS THE LITERACY COLLECTION BEING USED?

Peggy Barber
Executive Director for Communications
American Library Association

On behalf of all the members of the American Library Association, I bring congratulations to the Louisiana Library Association, Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, and the Louisiana Office for Literacy for your partnership in this second Literacy Forum. You are speaking out and taking action on the literacy needs in Louisiana. You are providing leadership to the rest of the nation. The published proceedings of last year's forum is a goldmine of advice and inspiration. I'm sure this year's speakers are adding to the wealth. I am honored to be here to learn and to share some ideas about the role of librarians in the literacy movement.

I don't pretend to be an expert on literacy. I am speaking from my experience directing ALA's communications and public relations program, where we have been working since 1974 to increase public awareness, support and appreciation of libraries. I'm here as a librarian who decided on her profession at the age of nine and has never regretted the decision for a minute. My personal mission is to fire-up librarians, to celebrate how good you are, and to work with you to make a difference in people's lives. Our job is opening minds. We're well equipped to do it, and the literacy movement is a perfect opportunity.

In the 1970's when the American Library Association launched the Public Information Office, we approached the Advertising Council for a national public service advertising campaign about libraries. Having seen the very visible Ad Council campaigns promote the Peace Corps, United Negro College Fund and Smokey the Bear's forest fire prevention, we were sure a similar campaign was in order to improve public awareness and support for libraries. The Ad Council staff said, "We don't promote institutions. We help solve problems." ALA then came back recommending a national campaign to make people aware of the plan and suggested developing a coalition of literacy providers. Librarians established the National Coalition for Literacy, the Ad Council Campaign was successful and the literacy movement began to grow and gather momentum.

Literacy is our business. It always has been. I recommend an article in the March 1991 issue of **American Libraries** that traces the history of library literacy programs and our work with immigrants at the turn of the century. Now that the world has caught up to us, and the problem of illiteracy has gained national attention, will we --librarians--lead or follow? I will offer you that choice, and convince you to answer "lead." We'll talk briefly about marketing, about professional commitment, and finally outline an action plan.

What about active leadership? The title I was given is a perfect example of passive followership: "Is the literacy collection being used?" Why build a literacy collection without first identifying a need and an audience? Why maintain a literacy collection if it isn't being used? This title inspires a lecture on marketing. I'll keep it brief, and, in true spirit of marketing, keep the audience in mind.

Librarians have made great progress in communications and outreach, but we have far to go. We are sometimes institution bound, and can be bureaucratic. What other profession is named for the building its members work in? We are incredibly efficient managers who produce a lot for very little money, but we may tend to do things the way they have always been done. We're often taken for granted. We're overworked and sometimes invisible. We worry a lot about our image and public perceptions. In fact, this reminds me of a story about a group of library school students who decided to do some "on the street" market research. They took tape recorders to State Street in Chicago and interviewed anyone they could get to talk with them. One interviewee said, "oh yeah, I know about the library...The library is a book suppository." Now even if that man had better control of his vocabulary . . . is a suppository or depository our best role? Is acquiring and organizing a literacy collection enough? No. In fact, it is a mistake without a plan.

It is useful to apply a marketing perspective to development of a library literacy program...or any library program.

Marketing, according to the guru of marketing for nonprofits, Philip Kotler, is "that function of the organization that can keep in constant touch with the organization's consumers, read their needs, develop products that meet these needs, and build a program of communications to express the organization's purposes." More simply, marketing means focussing on the needs of the user.

The marketing cycle involves...

1. **Research - Analyzing the situation and getting facts.**

I've read that the National Center for Education Statistics estimates that 16 percent of the adults in Louisiana are unable to read at any level.

Does this statistic hold in your community?
What is your high school dropout rate?
How many children are enrolled in Head Start?
How many are unserved?
How many employers have workplace literacy programs?
How many more need them?
Who are the literacy providers?
Is there a coalition?
Do you have all of this information?

2. **Planning -Setting goals and objectives, targeting a market segment, developing a communications strategy.**
In Decatur, Illinois, the librarian's research led them to a focus on new parents and they went after LSCA funds to launch "Baby Talk," a project in which library reading specialists put information about how to "raise a reader" into the hands of every new mother while she's still in the hospital. It is a very targeted project with clear goals and measurable objectives. Their planning obviously paid off. They received the grant. They are reaching people who may have never used the public library.

3. **Communications -Developing a message, publicity and promotion.**
The parents are invited to a program in the maternity ward. They are given handsome and useful materials. Community groups help with follow-up mailings so the library is in regular touch providing timely

> "*Every librarian should become a rabid dauntless literacy advocate, regardless of job assignment.*"

information about books and other materials for each stage of the baby's first year. The finale is a birthday party for the one-year-olds at the library. Everything about this program provides great feature story material. They have sought and received media attention.

4. **Evaluation- Measuring performance vs. plan and adjusting for variance.**
When the grant funds run out, the Decatur Library will face the real evaluation. What has been accomplished? Will they keep it going? I

know they have already discovered a need for materials in Spanish and for a version of the materials for new readers.

Another example of the marketing process put to work is revealed in a Library Video Magazine segment. "Lonesome Jim," a perfect example of marketing genius, is a librarian who got in touch with community needs and developed products to meet those needs. Chances are he never read Philip Kotler or any other marketing text, but he has personal vision and commitment. He's outside the building as much as he's in it (not one single scene is shot inside his library). He is making changes. He is making a difference in people's lives.

I'm probably preaching to the choir, but I think literacy should be part of the professional vision and commitment of every librarian. Take a step back for a moment to look at our profession. What is the one area most sacred to librarians? I think intellectual freedom wins hands down...and it is our success story. Because of our stand on First Amendment issues, librarians have made a difference in our society. The media turns to us as authorities. We have been consistent; we have fought local censors and even the FBI. We have won. Our support of First Amendment freedom translates a basic belief of our profession into action.

In 1948 the American Library Association adopted the Library Bill of Rights. In 1967, ALA established the Office for Intellectual Freedom to coordinate the implementation of intellectual freedom policy adopted by the ALA Council and to assist and defend librarians in censorship disputes. Since '67, librarians' time, thought, leadership, and money, at the national, state and local levels, plus the consistent hard work of Judith Krug, Director of ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom, have meant 24 years of achievement. I think we can provide simlar leadership for the literacy movement and do it in fewer than 24 years. We can provide commitment and a huge contribution to solving the problem. We can help the President and governors reach their education goals by the year 2000.

How? With the following action plan.

- Every librarian should become a rabid and dauntless literacy advocate, regardless of job assignment. This might mean volunteering to tutor, or helping to organize local fund raising activities. Even if you're a special librarian cataloging rare books in a museum library, everyone you know should know that you are a librarian committed to solving the problem of illiteracy. You have the responsibility to provide leadership.

- The Louisiana Library Association, ALA and all library associations should continue to provide literacy programs at every conference, and awards for leadership and excellence in the literacy movement. If the programs are not what you want, you have a responsibility to speak up and get the help you need.

- In every community (including schools and colleges), library staff should identify the core group of people needing services, find out who else is providing them, and get involved by contributing collections, funds, leadership, library space and/or direct instruction.

In Louisiana, is there still debate among librarians about whether we should be providing tutoring or other forms of direct instruction? The Federal Administration is bragging about a 9.3 percent increase in funding for education programs. If libraries are educational institutions, it is time to get that message to our funders.

I heard some very reassuring trends at the last meeting of the Coalition for Literacy. For example, Lennox McLendon, representing the State Directors of Adult Education, described integrated learning systems being put in place in Virginia. He said the system is based on the needs of the clients, not the structure of the organizations or the institutions providing service. The system of service will vary in every community based on resources and needs. He said, "We don't care who does it, as long as it gets done." We should be involved in advancing this trend!

- We should build literacy collections in partnership with community literacy efforts. The Kentucky Humanities project described by Ramona Lumpkin at your Literacy Forum last year is an excellent example. "New Books for New Readers" were written by Kentucky scholars who worked on their manuscripts with literacy students. In describing the project, one of the students in Harlan County, Kentucky, said, "This is the first time I have ever talked about ideas. It is like coming out of the dark!"

- Librarians should become proficient in speaking and writing in plain English. Plain English is clear, simple, direct language that can be understood by people at different reading levels. The Adult Basic Education Specialist at the Washington, D.C. Public Library has written a fact sheet about how to write in plain English. Here are two of her examples: Instead of writing "For your convenience in the utilization of these library materials," write, "To make it easier for you to use these library materials." Instead of "Demonstrate for your child"..."Show your child."

- We should lead the way in finding foundation and corporate support for literacy programs. One important key to successful development activity is good research. We know how to do good research.

The Bell Atlantic/ALA Family literacy project is an excellent example of a partnership with the private sector. Family literacy brings together three existing library programs: adult literacy, children's services and targeted outreach. So far the Bell Atlantic Foundation has made it possible for ALA to fund 25 public library family literacy projects in the Mid-Atlantic region where they are located. The grants provide funding for a one-year demonstration project, a cooperative effort between the librarians, adult education specialists or literacy providers, and community representatives for Bell Atlantic. A training seminar for all participants is included. The results to date are encouraging. We hope to use the project as a model for similar corporate vendors throughout the nation and would like to work with you to make this happen.

- Librarians should continue to do excellent work--especially in literacy programs--but we should spend more time telling the world about it. The American Libraries article I mentioned earlier quotes John Foster Carr, director of the Immigrant Publication Society. In 1913, he spoke to the ALA Conference about the more than 500 library literacy projects. "The sad part," he said, "was that librarians had achieved their accomplishments so quietly that the public was unaware how great an effort they had expended, how dedicated they were or how much success they had realized." If we continue this trend of quiet virtue, we will continue to face budget cuts of 75.5 percent.

We suggest that you tie into ALA's national public relations programs. This year's National Library Week is a great example. The theme is "Kids Who Read Succeed." There is an idea-filled campaign book with statistics about kids, reading and literacy, quotable facts, news release copy, print ads, all kinds of ingredients for a successful program that you can design to meet your local needs. There will also be another "Night of a Thousand Stars - Great American Read Aloud" on Wednesday, April 17, and this year ABC/PLUS- Project Literacy U.S. is joining us as a sponsor.

Celebrities of every stripe will be reading in libraries across the nation on April 17. I hope you are planning to join this celebration of family reading and literacy.

I have brought you information and sample materials. In exchange I need to hear your comments, suggestions and ideas for future national promotions. The best campaigns are born on the front lines.

Finally, to come full circle... Do you want to lead or follow? If you're wondering if your literacy collection is being used, remember: It is not the library that will provide the leadership, it is the librarians who care. It is not the collection that will make a difference, it is the people who care to get involved, form coalitions and make the most of every local, state and national resource.

Peggy Barber, *a Rutgers graduate, has been the Associate Executive Director of Communications for the American Library Association since 1984. She is responsible for the ALA's graphics program which provides direct services to more than 30,000 libraries and for new grant-funded programs including the* **Carnegie Video Project**, *and the* **Library Card Campaign**. *She is author of many essays featured in ALA publications as well as counselor to ALA staff and members on development and public relations.*

KEEPING THE ISSUE ALIVE

Karen Hering
Director of Publications and Education,
Wisconsin Hospital Association
(formerly, Public Awareness Specialist,
Minnesota Adult Literacy Campaign)

I'm here today to talk about keeping the issue of literacy alive. Who would've thought, five years ago, when the PLUS campaign hit the airwaves, that we would ever again be talking about how to keep this issue alive? Five years ago, very few of us even had time to consider that possibility. We were far too busy in the PLUS spotlight, answering our hotlines, training new volunteers, and responding to media inquiries... all prompted by the PLUS campaign raising the nation's awareness of this issue.

But PLUS couldn't last forever, and whatever PLUS did for literacy public awareness nationally, it did not and could not do what is only possible on the most local level. That is, to convince people that this is not just a problem in other parts of the country, but that it's a real issue in their own backyard.

To bring the issue home, to help people see just how pervasive and universal illiteracy is in their own community, has always required public awareness on a local level. In that sense, public awareness efforts are the first and most fundamental step in any attempt to address adult illiteracy. It is essential for fundraising, for effective student and volunteer recruitment and for increasing community ownership of any literacy program. In short, there's very little you can do without it.

Unfortunately, a lot of people do try to do without it. Too often, public awareness is assumed. We think that everyone knows illiteracy is a problem and everyone knows about the programs available and about our hotline or how to reach us... and besides, we're just too busy to be doing public awareness work, and if we're so busy, then we must not have a need for public awareness because we have plenty to do without it. Right? Wrong. That's the circular reasoning that is by no means unique to literacy programs. It is equally deadly to all kinds of nonprofits.

Now, what I'd like to suggest is that we can do better than that. By developing a simple marketing plan for your literacy program, and carrying out even just part of it, I'm willing to bet you'll be able to reach more of the people who most need your services as well as more of the people who can best fund your program.

Why take the time to develop a marketing plan for even a small literacy program? Because the people who most need literacy services are least likely to know about them. Because we live in an information age where messages must compete for our attention. Every day, we are each bombarded by more than 600 messages vying for our attention. Billboards, radio ads, junk mail, bumper stickers ... everywhere you look, there are loud, neon, day-glow orange messages competing for your attention. Unless the messages that tell people about literacy are well thought out, carefully chosen and placed, they will never make it against the competition.

So how do you market a service like adult basic education? It's not, after all, like selling toothpaste. Let's start with a simple definition of what I call "social marketing" or the marketing of a social service. Social marketing is an exchange. You offer programs or products that will enhance your client's quality of life; and in exchange, your client spends time, commitment and sometimes money. For those of us offering a free service, or a service at a minimal cost, it's easy to dismiss the investment required of an adult learner. But when you consider the time it takes to learn, and the scarcity of time in most adults' lives today, the balance of our exchange shifts dramatically. For many people, time is actually more scarce than money. And in terms of the time many adult learners invest, we probably have one of the most expensive services around.

Another factor in social marketing to keep in mind is that often times it involves an exchange that may be socially unacceptable or undesirable. This means we have to step back before we market our service. We must first create an environment or a public attitude that makes our exchange positive and desirable. Alcohol, drug abuse and other dependency programs have been very effective in this. It's now almost unacceptable not to belong to a 12-step program of one sort or another. AIDS programs have done this as well, by bringing condoms out from behind the counter and making it possible to purchase them without whispering.

For literacy, this is an area that PLUS made great strides in-- by increasing television viewers' understanding of illiteracy, PLUS made it acceptable to seek out literacy services. Likewise, in Minnesota, we decided this kind of

general public awareness had to precede any student recruitment or fundraising efforts. So we started with PSAs and a lot of media work simply to help the public--including the literate and illiterate, potential students, volunteers, public officials and potential private funders.

So where do you start in developing a marketing plan? I will take you through a step by step process. But first I want to emphasize that when you do this yourself, whenever possible, you should do this as a group of all the literacy providers in the community. Because most often the population in need of adult basic education is served by a number of literacy providers, each serving a particular type of adult learner. You'll get the most for your marketing effort if you can prepare a plan together, that will target all of the various populations you serve and make sure they are directed to the provider most appropriate for their needs.

First, talk to the other providers in your area, and convince them to work on a joint marketing plan. Then, give each provider a copy of a worksheet and ask them to fill out the Assessment and Background Information sheet for their particular program. Include adult learners in this process. They often have the most relevant information of all. And finally, convene the providers and learners and, together, review your assessment of the population currently and collectively being serviced by your programs and of the population in need that is not being reached. Based on that information, you can develop a marketing strategy to do a better job of reaching those you currently serve and to reach the people who still need to be served.

> *"...public awareness efforts are the first and most fundamental step in any attempt to address adult illiteracy."*

Now, take a look at your assessment and background information worksheet. The purpose of this worksheet is to collect on paper all of the information you will need to create a marketing plan. Much of the information on this sheet will be things you know simply from working or volunteering in your literacy program. Some of the information you may have to search for.

The more information and ideas you put down, the more possibilities you will have for marketing and the better defined or targeted those possibilities will be.

The first question on the sheet asks, "Who are the people in need of literacy services in your community?" To answer this question, get information

from the Louisiana Office of Literacy, census data, and general knowledge of local economic and population trends. Be as specific as you can. Whenever possible, include age, race, ethnic background, sex, employment, income levels and geographic location.

In Wisconsin, for instance, we know that 905,440 adults are without a high school diploma. About half of those people have not gone beyond the 8th grade, including 50,000 who did not go beyond the 4th grade. Most of these with the lowest level of skills live in non-urban areas and a high percentage (41%) are 70 or older. By contrast, only 12% of those who have completed grades 9-11 are 70 or older and most of these "at-risk" people live in urban areas. The entire population without high school diplomas includes more men than women and a higher percentage of minorities than the general population.

The second question on the sheet asks about the literacy services available in your community. What organizations provide which services and when and where and to whom? If you are developing a plan as a group, each group can provide its own data. But even if you're developing a plan as a single provider, you should try to include as much information about other providers as you can. For instance, if another provider is serving the same population as you, you will need to consider this in marketing your program. On the other hand, if you list all the services available from all providers in your community and you discover that no one has enrolled any single mothers, or young adult men, for example, you should consider why this is so and whether changes need to be make to serve these people.

This takes us to question #3, which asks you to identify any market segments that are underserved or unserved in your community. Of course, listing them here doesn't mean you'll have to target these markets. It may be that scarce resources prevent you from reaching many market segments. However, the point is that you should be aware of who does and does not receive literacy services in your community so that you're making a conscious decision about your target market and you're not just serving the easiest to reach.

Question #4 is really a brainstorming question. Here you'll want to list any "point of contact" you could have with the market segments. Think creatively and put any possibilities that come to mind down on paper.

Finally, the last question asks you to take that one step further and specifically list any materials, resources and opportunities you might have to reach your target population. Each organization should list its own unique opportunities so that you can collectively assess your marketing

potential. For instance, if the local Literacy Council has produced a public service announcement and another provider has printed posters, you may be able to share these resources and avoid duplication.

List your resources, both the amount of money you can spend on marketing and, more importantly, the donated services you might be able to solicit. I can't say enough about how important it is to know who your friends are--board members, volunteers, friends, spouses of friends, etc., who are in a position to help you. News reporters and editorial board members, advertising professionals...these are all people who can be very helpful to you. And I wouldn't hesitate to ask them to help you. In my experience, I've been amazed by how much people are willing to do for a cause like literacy and how happy they are to do it.

In Minnesota, when I first discovered I was to develop a statewide student recruitment campaign with $5,000.00 budget, I thought I was being set up for defeat. But six months later, we had created and produced more than a half million check stuffers that were mailed out with unemployment checks and medical assistance cards, several thousand large posters with three different messages for libraries and literacy programs throughout the state, a recorded radio PSA distributed to 100 stations statewide and numerous copies of camera-ready artwork for print ads distributed to the print media, businesses and literacy programs for duplication in any printed format. The grand total of this campaign came to $2,152.99 which all went to purchase paper (at cost) for some of our printing. All creative services, printing and recording were donated by over a dozen companies and individuals.

My point is, it doesn't hurt to ask.

Now, once you've had all your participating providers fill out the first worksheet, it's time to convene a meeting to talk about worksheet #2. This sheet asks you to define your target market, what message and strategy you will use to reach; that audience and how you'll evaluate what you've done.

First of all, go back to your assessment sheet and, based on that information, decide which market segment or segments you will try to reach. Describe any characteristics of the populations that might affect the type of services they need or the type of message required to reach them. If you are targeting single parents, for instance, you will want to address their need for childcare.

Then, think about the message you need to communicate. This is not the time or place to develop a catchy slogan. That comes later. At this point, just list several short, simple phrases or words that convey your selling points. Focus on content. Phrases like "learn to read" are probably good for starters, along with messages about finding or improving a job or helping your children in school. In addition to your selling points, your message must include a "call to action"-- a phone number or a mail-in card or some simple way for the audience to reach your program. At this point, you don't need to specify how this will be done. Just make sure to list "call to action" so that it is incorporated in your final message.

Now, with question #3, you're finally ready to develop your plan. At this point, if you have an advertising agency willing to donate services, you can give this information to the agency and let them run with it. Here is where you decide what medium is most appropriate for your message and your audience, and then match that up with your resources and opportunities. Lay out your strategies and for each strategy, identify someone who will be responsible for that part of the marketing plan. Be creative. Don't be too quick to dismiss any idea.

One of the more unique things we did in Minnesota, was to produce a literacy play with a local theatre in St. Paul. It was designed as both a public awareness and a student recruitment tool--a one-person show with music and humor that told the stories of several adults with literacy problems. It played shopping malls, workplace lunchrooms, union halls, prisons, county fairs... any place where people were already gathered for another purpose. And the play ended with the actor handing out, as part of his act, cards with the basic Skills Hotline number. In this format, we found an entertaining and significantly unwritten way to deliver our message to people who might either need literacy services or know someone else who needs help.

Included in these strategies should be your media campaign. You can get a lot of free publicity and promotion if you simply get your information to the right people using the right angle. And to do that you should incorporate a media plan in your strategies. I'll talk more about working with the media in a minute, but first I want to finish the marketing plan. Once you've developed your strategies, if you didn't include a timeline for each strategy, lay that out in question #4. It helps to have one timeline for all of the strategies so you can see what order the entire campaign will follow and when things will overlap.

Finally, in the last question of the worksheets, identify several methods for evaluating your marketing plan. In some cases, you might just want to collect data on the number of phone calls you receive, or your enrollment figures. But these numbers are often influenced by other factors and enrollment figures alone might not reflect how many people are actually calling for information. It will be most helpful for you to know just what strategy is actually motivating people to use your services, and that might require coding your response cards or asking new learners where they heard about you when they enroll. Other evaluation methods might include a survey of learners and/or providers or adult learner focus groups. Whatever your method, it is useful to decide in advance so you can collect the necessary data before, during, and after implementing your marketing plan.

Now, let me go back to the media campaign I mentioned earlier. It's easy to get frustrated by trying to get media coverage because so often, either the media doesn't report on our news at all, or when they do cover it, they don't do it the way we want it reported. So I've found that I'm better off if I always adjust my expectations accordingly before doing any work with the media; but I've also found there are some simple things I can do to increase my chances of getting the kind of coverage I want.

1. **Develop contacts.**
Get to know the reporters covering education and community features. Work to establish yourself as a reliable source of information and ideas. Don't bother them with every detail of you program, but be sure they have plenty of information well in advance of any newsworthy event or development. Also, get to know the editorial boards of your local newspapers. Periodic meetings with editorial boards will keep these important opinion leaders informed of your program and can assure that they'll consider your viewpoint when writing editorials about literacy.

2. **Be timely.**
Reporters are on strict deadlines. Send your news releases well in advance and return all reporters' calls promptly.

3. **Be accurate.**
Never give out information you are not sure is accurate, unless you inform the reporter it is an estimate. In the area of literacy statistics, the media are frequently frustrated because many literacy organizations use their own definition of literacy, and estimates of the number of illiterate adults vary tremendously. You can probably increase your media coverage simply by getting all providers in your commuynity to agree to a single definition of

literacy and to one estimate of the size of the problem. Distribute your definition and estimate to all local media and providers to assure that the same numbers will be used in the future as well.

4. **Be a resource.**
Keep files available with information frequently requested by the media, especially names of other contacts. It's especially useful to keep a file of adult learners who are willing to talk to the media and to know some of their background so you can steer reporters to a possible interview that will apply to the particular story they're writing.

5. **Be well-spoken.**
When you've sent out a news release or when you're involved in a newsworthy event, be prepared to offer concise, intelligent and interesting quotes. When being interviewed by radio and television reporters, it's especially important to provide brief answers that get your point across clearly.

6. **Be creative.**
If you want media coverage of an event or development that may not be newsworthy by itself, organize a media event that will make it newsworthy. Don't underestimate the power of symbols. (e.g. If you want to promote the GED, consider asking your mayor and community leaders to take the test; then stage a mock graduation. We did this in Minneapolis and got front page coverage in the state section and six o'clock news coverage on all three network stations.)

With that, I'd like to open the floor for questions. I've brought along a number of samples including a videotape of PSAs for television, some footage from "Catching On" the literacy play we produced in St. Paul, camera-ready artwork for ads, and check stuffers from both Minnesota and Wisconsin. And I'd like to hear some of the things you're doing as well to "keep the issue alive."

Karen Hering. *As coordinator of public awareness for the Minnesota Adult Literacy Campaign, Ms. Hering developed the first statewide public awareness and student recruitment campaign for adult basic education programs in Minnesota. She developed numerous materials for promoting adult learning, as well as producing a play about adult literacy that has been performed across the United States. With over ten years experience in communications and marketing for non-profit organizations, Ms. Hering is currently employed at the Wisconsin Hospital Association as director of publications and education programs.*

FAMILY LITERACY
ITS PAST AND ITS PROMISE

Meta Potts
Director, Adult Learning Services
National Center for Family Literacy

To those of us who grew up in families in which literacy was not only a reality but a priority, the idea of family literacy seems so simple--Mothers and Fathers assigned time and energy to what the family considered its goals, needs, and functions in relationship to literate behavior. You can remember being gently rocked while a parent or caretaker read Mother Goose Rhymes and Aesop's Fables, The Three Bears or Little Red Riding Hood, Black Beauty and The Little Engine That Could. You may remember owning cigar boxes filled with fat wax crayons and stubby pencils, dusty chalk and ping erasers, all tools of literacy. The lucky ones remember trips to the library and the fascinating "story lady," the enormous board above the main check-out desk upon which were recorded the names of 'book buddies' and summer contest winners.

Perhaps, like me, you remember a grandparent absorbed in reading the newspaper, an uncle who wrote long and detailed letters, a mother who belonged to book clubs and who ordered special-interest magazines for all her children.

You remember, too, browsing through B Dalton's or Walden's book stores, collecting childhood favorites to please your own children or grandchildren at holiday time. You have bought all the new neon crayons, the magic markers that smell like strawberries, and soap that writes on bathtub walls. Your shelves are lined with Golden Books, Famous Hero Collections, Junior Science Manuals, and Encyclopedia.

What I have described is Family Literacy--the intergenerational sharing of literate experiences-- reading and writing, coloring and computing, singing and storytelling-- experiences that provide a family environment which supports and expands the range of literacy activities in the home and which encourages parents to incorporate those activities into their own culture context.

Not all adults in our society share in those memories and neither will their children. Their families had a commitment to the general goals of

education. They had dreams of success for their children's future, but they saw education as the school's job. The informational system for making connections between the home and the school was not intact. They may have had parents who had no feeling of control over their own lives, and therefore, did not communicate high expectations to their children. Lacking the opportunities to experiment with language development at home, those children entered school as much as two years behind their more advantaged peers, and many stayed behind until they dropped out. The pattern and cycle continue. We have heard the pleas for more preventative programs for children, and monies have multiplied for additional preschool programs. But dropout rates continue to grow and literacy problems continue to plague the nation.

A new awareness, the need to meet the needs of the family first, recognizing that all families have strengths as the basis for addressing literacy practices, has become widespread. And Family Literacy Programs, which give parents access to the training and support they need, were born. Such programs exist now in nearly every state.

A Family Literacy Program can be described as an "educative community" in which both parents and children become teachers and learners. Such programs take an intergenerational approach and encourage adults to acquire skills by helping their children learn. When we give equal priority to the education of the parents and the children, we meet children where they are-- in families. When we meet undereducated parents where they are, we can build upon their strengths, giving them skills to meet their intellectual expectations and aspirations for their children.

The Council of Chief State School Officers' document, **Family Support, Education and Involvement: A Guide for State Action (L990)**, starts from the premise that schools cannot operate in isolation from the family and the community. They recommend that school systems build their programmatic initiatives on six principles:

- a two-generational, as opposed to exclusive child-focused program
- a comprehensive, long-term strategy, as opposed to a quick-fix
- a recognition of family diversity
- an emphasis on prevention and enhancement of development, as well as on the capacity to respond when prevention is not enough
- linkage and collaboration with other agencies
- programs and actions geared toward families that will empower them to progress and regenerate so that they remain viable after supports are lessened or withdrawn

Three hundred two-generational programs already in operation were researched and categorized by Ruth Nickse and reported in **The Noises of Literacy: An Overview of Practice for Family and Intergenerational Literacy (1990).**

Type 1 programs directly address the needs of both adults and children. They meet frequently, as often as 3 to 5 times a week throughout the school year, often extending into the summer. Characteristics include in-depth, cognitive instruction and active learning, integrated programming, and parent/child interaction within the context of the program.

Type 2 programs promote reading for enjoyment, and fund literacy enrichment events. There is less intensive participation, tutoring for adults and indirect benefits for the children.

Type 3 programs include direct instruction for adults and invite occasional participation by the children. Usually, the adults have similar characteristics, such as ethnicity, interests, or circumstances. Seminars and workshops replace long-term classes.

Type 4 programs view the child as the primary beneficiary of the literacy curriculum, and the parent's degree of participation is related to their own skills and confidence.

While the programs are difficult to compare and evaluate, it appears that it is crucial to target specific needs and tailor programs to specific communities. Research shows us that Family Literacy Programs which seem to have the most impact upon educational values, hold adults longer, and maintain attendance are those which meet a variety of needs; they are family-centered projects, likely to support and strengthen family functioning. Such Family Literacy programs are part of a systematic plan, linked in patterns of dependence and interdependence within a variety of areas.

"Research shows us that Family Literacy Programs which seem to have the most impact upon educational values, hold adults longer, and maintain attendance are those which meet a variety of needs; they are family-centered projects, likely to support and strengthen family functioning."

The systems approach implies an interrelatedness of the components in which the connections are responsive to the concerns, desires, needs, and

aspirations of the individual components. Two models which fit this description are the PACE model in Kentucky and the Kenan Model, replicated in 91 sites, 1,638 families, from Hawaii to Massachusetts. In these programs there are four parts to the whole.

The Adult Education component challenges parents with an interdisciplinary curriculum, using active learning techniques, a whole-language orientation, and cooperative learning strategies. It meets first the educational needs of parents, but it also serves as support for the other program components. The Adult Ed component is likely to have a great effect on the family unit. Because of the development of skills and values in reference to education, it will influence family goals, language experience, and activities.

The Early Childhood Education component is a developmentally appropriate curriculum in which active learning techniques are the mode. This component is likely to greater direct effect on the child than the other components, and it supports the other program in a variety of ways.

The Parent Time component supports the adult education component with cognitive content, enhances a sense of community, increases interdependence, fosters communication and an exchange of information. It becomes a caring unit and an informal resource for the adults in the program. As answers to problems are generated within the group, the circle of support becomes a mutual aid society, which increases the individual's ability to cope with the critical issues in her life. This, in turn, reduces dependence on formal supports, such as social service systems.

The Parent and Child Interaction component recognizes and applauds the home as the foundation of the child's learning. As parents participate in playful interaction with their children, they are allowed to try on new behaviors--children direct activities, and parents to increase the nature and amount of help they give to extend learning in a variety of situations and expands their view of children as learners.

The most significant influence follows from the interaction of the component parts of the system. Each part acting alone can produce change; but significant change results as intensity of the combined components synthesizes, so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Family Literacy programs, then, are a new form of education--not just a duplication of present adult education or early childhood programs. Evaluation must reflect that difference and must focus on families. Individual measures are still applicable and valid but they are not measures of

the program's success in and of themselves. They have to be interpreted within the family context. Testing and reporting on GED acquisition or on developmental gains of children is meaningful when interpreted within the family context. Changes in families occur because of the influence of the total program.

The PRESENT of Family Literacy Programs is conceptually sound, grounded in the fundamental belief that families come to us with strength and abilities, which can support further efforts to expand literate behaviors. Quality models are grounded in (1) research and development, collecting evaluation data to document the effects upon families; (2) in staff development efforts, targeted at various groups in order to meet a variety of needs: (3) dissemination strategies designed to communicate to appropriate audiences in appropriate formats; and (4) advocacy and policy development, focused particularly on state and national diffusion.

The PROMISE of Family Literacy Programs lies with dissemination of the concepts, the ideas and the basic goals. Nationally, the Even Start Legislation has enabled the funding of programs in every state, but locally, superintendents, principals, and program providers must take up the banner and institutionalize the program, embedding the concept into policy.

At the community level, foundations and businesses need to be involved, supporting programs as advisors as well as with finances. At the site level, staff must be committed, not just to the idea, but to the goals of Family Literacy. Perhaps the most important message is this: partnerships and linkages will be the key to the future of Family Literacy. Most likely, programs will need more than one funding source in order to thrive. Therefore, Chapter 1, Library Programs, Adult Education Units, JTPA, Welfare Reform, Head Start, Literacy Volunteers and others will join to become interdependent partners and promote the goals of Family Literacy.

A Family Literacy Program should be seen as a system, a plan linked in patterns of dependence and interdependence within a variety of areas.

Adult Education component presents:

- an interdisciplinary curriculum
- an active learning approach
- a whole-language orientation
- cooperative learning strategies
- critical and creative thinking mode

- a view of community resources as support for the curriculum
- support for the other program components.

Early Childhood Component Presents:

- an active learning approach
- developmentally appropriate curriculum
- support for the other program components

Parent Time Group Component Presents:

- support for cognitive content of Adult Ed
- peer support for members of the group
- resource for information
- coping strategies
- support for the other program components

Pact Time Component Presents:

- support for family interaction
- the time and place to practice newly acquired skills
- support for the other program components

LESSONS LEARNED FROM RESEARCH AND EXPERIENCE

1. The family unit is the first and primary source of knowledge, language, values, social relationships, and environment for young children. The family unit transmits messages, defines patterns of behavior. Early childhood experience is the primary predictor of later states in life.

2. The location of the family in physical and social setting dramatically affects the nature of the family unit, defining factors about self, appropriate behavior, aspirations for achievement--it is the primary determinant for cultural identity.

3. The Adult Education Component is likely to have a great effect on the family unit. Because of the development of skills and values in reference to education, it will influence family goals, language experience, and activities.

4. The Early Childhood Component is likely to have greater direct effect than other components because of active learning, experience, and activities.

5. PACT time changes view of parent toward child as a learner; expectations and interactions change and this carries over into the home and affects other children.

6. Parent Time directly affects interaction between parent and child.

7. The HRD Component results in new skills, behaviors, attitudes, and expectations, having significant indirect effects upon the child.

8. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE FOLLOWS FROM INTERACTION OF THE COMPONENT PARTS OF THE SYSTEM. Each part acting alone can produce change; combined components synthesizes, so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

1. The adults (teachers & assistant) in the early childhood classroom serve as facilitators and observers of child-initiated learning. They extend and consolidate the learning by adding new information when appropriate.

2. The teacher in the adult education classroom serves as a facilitator and resource person, as well as an observer.

3. The teachers in the Parent Time Component serve as models, observers, and support for parents.

THE ROLE OF THE POLICY MAKER IN THIS MODEL

Ask for clear definitions of literacy and find out where the concept of "Family Literacy" fits in with other goals. Help providers target groups.

Relate the target group to statewide goals, such as reducing welfare, upgrading labor force skills or improving public education by increasing parental involvement.

Assess the existing powers as potential tools to bring about program participation.

Insist upon a written set of program performance standards and guidelines. Review these and take steps to tie funding to outcomes.

Develop legislation and funding proposals to provide training and dissemination of best practices of experienced Family Literacy programs to literacy professionals in the state.

Build into the funding of local programs the resources to develop a profession.

Besides examining federal and state programs to fund literacy efforts, consider creating a state literacy foundation to solicit private contributions and provide seed money to promising programs.

Support a strong federal role in the interest, establishment, and funding of literacy efforts at the state and local levels.

THE ROLE OF LITERACY PROVIDERS IN THIS MODEL

Insist that the definition of Family Literacy be contextual, relating to your clients and their needs.

Lobby the Governor and other members of the Legislature to make public their stand on Family Literacy issues and programs.

Examine target groups carefully to identify constraints and barriers to their participation; seek help from local agencies to provide incentives.

Work with your local network to develop programs that will meet performance standards, based on a sensitivity to the social, economic and emotional needs, problems and life circumstances of the learner.

Help design programs that appreciate ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Develop standards and techniques which use a variety of instructional methods and new technologies.

Develop a strong staff development component. Share best practices.

Dr. Meta Potts *serves as Director of Adult Learning Services for the National Center for Family Literacy in Louisville, Kentucky. She holds a doctorate in Curriculum/Supervision and English Education from Vanderbilt University. She has done research and writing in the area of developing literacy in the family context. Dr. Potts authored and presented six programs on "learning to write" for the PBS affiliate in Arkansas. She has written many training manuals, professional journal articles and "how to" manuals for teachers, including critical thinking skills and test-anxiety materials.*

GRANT WRITING TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL LITERACY PROJECTS

Carol Cameron Lyons
US Department of Education
Washington, D.C.

Writing an application for a federal grant program can be an intimidating task. The federal application package itself looks so overwhelming with all its forms and instructions that you can be discouraged before you even start to write your proposal. Many librarians are not experienced in writing grant application proposals and even for those who are, the federal application process can be very different from that used by other agencies. I hope to help you work your way through the maze, give you an overview of the federal process, and identify key features of good application proposals for the Library Literacy program, Title VI of the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA VI).

It is important to submit high quality grant applications to the Library Literacy Program for two important reasons: we receive more applications now than we can possibly fund and the competition for funds grows stiffer every year as the quality of the applications improve. Approximately forty to fifty percent of the applications that are submitted are funded. In addition, we have worked hard during the past few years to improve the peer review process of applications, giving reviewers more detailed guidance as to their role in the reviews process and improved instructions on how to review LSCA VI applications. With these improvements and their own knowledge about library-based literacy programs, the reviewers give LSCA VI applications increasingly thorough, critical evaluations.

Background on LSCA VI

The basic purpose of the LSCA VI Literacy Program is to support literacy projects through state and local public libraries. LSCA VI was the first discretionary grant program for state and local public libraries where both applied directly to the federal government and competed for the same funds. The four goals of the Library Literacy Program are:

- To reduce the rate of illiteracy among adults;
- To help libraries be more actively involved in adult literacy;

* To encourage cooperation among literacy providers in a community

* To promote volunteerism -- of people and organizations.

The program is now five years old. It was first funded in FY 1986 and has been funded at or near $5 million annually since. Then in FY 1991 the maximum grant amount was raised from $25,000 to $35,000 and the appropriation was increased to $8,163,000. In the past, the program supported about 230-250 grants each year; however, in FY 1991 we estimate that about 270 grants will be awarded.

The Grant Cycle

The Library Literacy Program holds one grant competition each year. The competition usually follows this schedule: The notice inviting applications is published in the Federal Register in the summer -- normally in July. In September, application packages are mailed to potential applicants, including libraries that applied the year before as well as people who have specifically requested an LSCA VI application package. For the past three years, the deadline for submitting LSCA VI applications to the Department of Education has been in November, on the 8th or 9th.

At the same time the applicant submits the proposal to the U.S. Department of Education, the applicant must also submit the proposal to the State library. This is a new requirement, designed to give the State Library the opportunity to review LSCA VI applications for consistency with the State Library's long range plans. Louisiana does not participate in the Intergovernmental Review under Executive Order 12372, so Louisiana applicants do not have to follow the procedures in the LSCA VI application package for this review.

The target date for making awards is the end of June. Projects usually begin operation on October 1 and run through September 30 of the next year.

Offices Involved in Grant Awards

I would like to discuss briefly some of the offices at the Department that are involved in the grant award process. If you receive a grant award, you will be working with all of these offices at one time or another. The Application Control Center (ACC) is the office that receives your application, logs it in to track it during the pre-award state, and determines whether the application was submitted on time. ACC sends it on to the

program office, my office -- Library Programs -- where we arrange for the peer review and make the funding recommendations. If your application is recommended for funding, it goes on to Grants and Contracts Services (GCS) which will initiate negotiations where necessary and finally issue the grant award document. If the application is funded, you will work with my office during the grant period on matters related to the substance or operation of your project while GCS will be responsible for administrative matters, such as budget or other technical revisions to the project. The last office to become involved is the Financial Management Service (FMS) which disburses the funds and monitors expenditures through the quarterly financial reports.

> *"We can fund family or intergenerational literacy programs only when improving the literacy skills of an adult population is the focus of the project."*

Eligibility, Types of Projects and Other Requirements

Eligibility: Only state and local public libraries are eligible to apply for and receive LSCA VI funds. To qualify, a local public library must receive at least some funding from public sources, serve the residents of its area free of charge, and cannot be an integral part of another institution. Eligible libraries include traditional local public libraries, library systems, regional libraries, tribal libraries, and research libraries that meet the conditions outlined above.

Types of Projects: Most LSCA VI projects provide literacy instruction to adults with low level literacy skills, frequently employing one-to-one tutoring by volunteers. Some are working with adults who want to get their GEDs. LSCA VI projects do not have to be unique. Funds can be used to expand, continue, or start literacy services in an area. And projects can have many different focuses: supporting general literacy services or English as a Second Language, family literacy, workforce literacy programs; training volunteers or librarians; promoting awareness of literacy; developing a collection of literacy materials; providing computer assisted instruction; or serving a special population group.

LSCA VI projects must be focused on the needs of adults. We can fund family or intergenerational literacy programs only when
improving the literacy skills of an adult population is the focus of the project. For example, we have funded projects that tutor parents and their children separately and then together to encourage family reading, or

projects to help improve the literacy skills of new mothers which in turn will help them prepare their children to learn to read in school. But, children's reading readiness programs or high school drop-out prevention programs are not eligible for funding.

The project should have a volunteer component. However, paid staff and paid teachers are eligible expenditures as long as there is some element of volunteerism in the project from individuals or organizations.

Finally, projects should cooperate or coordinate with other literacy providers in the community. The level of involvement will vary depending on the agencies or organizations you chose to work with. If you are working with a literacy council or group that will operate the project on a daily basis, be sure the library is adequately involved in the project and benefits in some way, e.g., instructing literacy students in how to use the library or training library staff in providing services to adult new readers. The library as the grantee is responsible for the use of the federal funds.

Other Requirements: Although we do not specify the method of literacy instruction to be used, LVA and Laubach are the most common methods employed, but you can develop your own or modify either of those two. If you use a different method of instruction, it is a good idea to explain your method briefly for the reviewers who may not be familiar with it.

We get many questions about priorities, matching, and funding distribution, so I would like to discuss those now. LSCA VI does not establish annual priorities (i.e., family, prison, or workplace literacy projects). Each project is designed to meet the needs of the local community. As far as matching funds is concerned, libraries are not required to match LSCA VI funds by any amount, although you may want to have additional funds from other sources involved in your project.

Generally, projects are funded in rank order based on the scores and comments of the review panel. We are not required to have a geographic distribution of projects either across the country or within a state. Also, we do not try to fund a certain percentage of new or continuing projects. Each project is evaluated on its own merits as put forth in the application.

Selection Criteria

The easiest way to organize your proposal is to write the narrative in the order of the selection criteria: plan of operation, quality of key personnel, budget and cost effectiveness, evaluation plan, adequacy of resources, and

cooperation and coordination. These criteria can be found in the program regulations in Section F of the application package.

A basic rule to follow is to fully explain all aspects of your project. Don't assume that the program staff or the reviewers will have any knowledge about your project. Describe fully what may seem obvious to you -- the need for literacy services in the community, the population to be served, the resources available, the people involved, and the method of instruction, testing, or recruitment.

Because LSCA VI applications are reviewed by a panel of library and literacy specialists who are not part of the U. S. Department of Education, they have no access to information about the project other than what is included in the grant applications they are asked to review. Applications are assigned randomly to reviewers. However, reviewers do not read applications from libraries in their own state. Therefore, they will not be familiar with state policies or local problems and efforts. This is also important for current grantees to keep in mind when they apply for another grant. (LSCA VI makes one-year grant awards.) When reapplying, current grantees are competing anew and must submit a completely new application. Reviewers will not be familiar with previous grants or accomplishments.

I would now like to discuss each selection criterion individually. Following the guidelines set forth in the selection criteria should result in a narrative that explains what you want to accomplish, how it will be done, who will do what, and how the money will be spent.

Plan of Operation: The plan of operation does not have to be complicated, but it must be clear. Articulate the goals (broad, long range) and objectives (specific products, results, time-oriented) and describe how the objectives will be met. Some type of timeframe should be given for the objectives and activities. Here, at the beginning of your proposal, is a good place to include a discussion of the need for literacy services in your community. If you can establish the need for the project early in the proposal, you can eliminate many questions and concerns, and greatly reduce the need to justify activities later.

Quality of Key Personnel: A good staff is essential to the success of a project. If you are going to hire staff such as a project director or literacy coordinator, include an adequate salary that will allow you to attract qualified people. LSCA VI projects are limited to $35,000 and sometimes our grantees try to stretch the funds too far. Several projects have run into problems when they allowed for very low salaries and then were either

unable to hire anyone or took half the grant period getting someone on board.

Also, be sure to give your staff adequate time to carry out activities. Don't expect a part-time coordinator to do a fulltime job. Explain in your proposal how their time will be used.

To help us evaluate the quality of key project personnel, include resumes or a brief professional biography in your application if you know who the actual staff will be. If not, provide a job description for the positions to be filled. Explain why the positions are needed for the project.

A few special notes on project personnel. Be consistent in your use of titles. For example, don't call someone a coordinator in one place and project director in another place in the application. This makes it very difficult to determine how many people are on your staff and who is responsible for what activities. You can refer to people by name, but make sure that their position or title has been clearly established. Give some thought to the library's hiring procedures and whether the library will be hiring literacy personnel as regular library employees. Otherwise you will want to be prepared to develop a contract to use if personnel are not library employees. This protects both the library and the employee. We have had several occasions where this distinction determined the rate of pay for literacy staff and whether they were entitled to fringe benefits. Problems can also arise if the person who developed the application leaves the program and verbal agreements or promises with remaining staff fall apart.

Budget and Cost Effectiveness: Expenses must be directly related and essential to project. Justify all items appearing in the budget. Describe how travel, especially to conferences, are necessary to the project. Refer to your objectives to justify budget items. Provide supporting documentation -- county fee schedules, contract regulations, guidelines for honorariums -- if unusual or high cost items are being requested. For equipment, describe how major pieces such as computers will be used and who will use them.

If your project is a part of a larger project (e.g., all LSCA VI funds will support one aspect of the project such as materials or salaries, while the library or another organization will fund the rest of the project), briefly describe the total budget for the project: who will provide what amount of funds for what proposes. This helps put the LSCA VI budget into perspective and helps us evaluate the effectiveness of the LSCA VI component. It is always a good idea to discuss financial and in-kind support

from the library or other organizations; this demonstrates that the project has the support of the library and community.

What ever you do, don't pad the budget. On the other hand, don't try to "nickel and dime" it too much either. Our goal is to fund what is needed to make the project successful, but not to fund items that the library budget should handle, such as membership fees in literacy organizations for on-going projects.

LSCA VI funds can be used to support just about anything that is necessary to conduct a literacy project. Many people don't realize that LSCA VI funds can be used for such things as salaries, tutor and student expenses (training, transportation, child care), equipment, and rent when necessary. Basically, the only costs that are not allowed are for fundraising, lobbying, entertainment (refreshments), and construction, although minor renovations can be funded.

Evaluation Plan: This is frequently the weakest area of our applications. How to evaluate the effectiveness of literacy programs is an issue that is unresolved in the literacy field itself. Your evaluation plan should be based on measuring the achievement of the goals and objectives outlined in your plan of operation. Be careful not to evaluate something that isn't part of the project, for example, measuring student progress when the project is about generating public awareness of the problem of illiteracy in the community. Depending on the nature of your project, the evaluation can be done by an outside evaluator or by project personnel.

> *"Grant applications should show a balance between good writing and a good project."*

Adequacy of Resources: In this section, we are trying to determine that the project has adequate space, equipment, facilities, and materials. You should describe what the library and any cooperating agencies will bring to bear on the project. Take credit for what the library will contribute to the project, for example, human resources, supplies, fiscal management, space, and equipment.

Cooperation and coordination: LSCA VI projects should cooperate with other literacy providers in the community. You should outline your coordination strategy, provide evidence that you have communicated with these other literacy providers and describe the role they will play and steps

taken to avoid duplication of effort. Letters of support from collaborating organizations are a good way of showing that they have agreed to participate in the project.

In summary, an LSCA VI application should:

* demonstrate need;
* contain clear goals and objectives;
* describe a good plan of management to meet the goals and objectives;
* include a realistic and justified budget;
* show evidence that well qualified people who have sufficient time will implement the project;
* show evidence of adequate materials, equipment, and facilities;
* contain appropriate, objective, quantifiable measures of evaluation.

The common strengths of successful projects are: they are well planned; their activities are well spelled out; they have qualified, competent staff; and they have written agreements in place.

Some problems we have seen in projects unable to meet their goals and objectives are: underestimating the time required or the resources needed to carry out the activities of the project; trying to do too much with limited resources; and experiencing delays due to staff turnover when a clear plan for the project has not been established or prior agreements have not been spelled in detail.

Special Cases

Multiple Applications: We have had some unique problems with applications from Louisiana libraries. Each year we have received multiple applications from at least one library system. Different applications are submitted for different branches in the system, but each application is written identically. To complicate matters further, when the applications are submitted, they are submitted as one package, making it very difficult to distinguish the applications. Most importantly, our reviewers have expressed concerns about this approach to obtaining more than one LSCA VI grant in a year.

A library system is allowed to submit multiple applications. There is no limit as to the number of grants you can receive in a year. Different grants can be for different types of projects -- basic, family, or prison literacy, for example -- or they can serve different populations in the community as reflected by the service area of the different branches. However, the applications should not be identically written; they should be individualized for the community or population the project is to serve. There can be common areas and activities in each application, just be sure that you describe the needs of the different communities and the specific activities, staff, and budget for each application so that we are certain these are distinct projects. However, when submitting multiple applications, be sure that each application reflects the number of people to be served, the time required of personnel, and the budget categories for the particular project, not for all applications together.

Multiple applications that are identically written are not often successful. Comments from our reviewers have included questions on the need for so much money in one area, whether the proposals can stand alone, complaints that boiler plate language is a way of getting around writing a separate application, and that these applications lack specificity. In identically written multiple applications, it is often unclear who's being served by each proposal; who's involved in each proposal; how many tutors, students, or library branches are involved; and how hours, salaries, and budgets are split among the projects.

Let me give you two examples demonstrating how a library system can submit multiple applications in a year.

Last year, the Terrebonne Parish Library submitted three applications, one each for three branches in the system. Three different populations were described, one per application. They explained why the branches were chosen and their particular need for literacy services. They also explained why the literacy services and equipment were divided among the branches the way they were. And, each application had slight differences in the budgets to accommodate the different activities to be conducted at the different branches.

Another approach to submitting multiple applications is the one used by the Chicago Public Library. Each year we receive several applications from them for very distinct projects to be conducted at different branch libraries. They may submit three applications in a year, one for a family literacy project in one branch, a second for a prison literacy project in another branch, and a third for an ESL project in yet another branch.

Working with another literacy organization: If you are working closely with a literacy council or other organization, explain the relationship between it and the library. Be sure the application reflects the library's point of view. This is especially important when the other organization is going to be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the project, for example when a literacy council will recruit tutors and students, train the tutors, and oversee the literacy instruction while the library develops a collection of literacy materials to support the project. This type of project relationship is allowable, especially since it encourages cooperation and avoids duplicating literacy efforts in a community. However, one of the purposes of LSCA VI is to get libraries involved in literacy activities and we do not want the program to become a means for passing funds through the library for the benefit of another organization. In the final analysis, the library must benefit from the project. For example, as a part of a project, literacy students could be instructed in how to use the library and librarians could be trained in providing services to adult new readers. At a minimum, it must be clear that the library will administer LSCA VI funds and be involved in decision-making for the part of the literacy effort supported by LSCA VI.

Joint projects: Joint projects are allowed under LSCA VI. A joint project is one that involves two or more eligible library systems. Each participating library system may receive up to the maximum amount of $35,000, allowing two or more libraries to pool their resources and coordinate their literacy efforts. The only stipulations are that each participant must be a library that would be eligible to apply separately on its own and that no more than $35,000 can go to any of the participating libraries. One of the libraries must be designated to act as the primary applicant and fiscal agent, and each participating library must sign an agreement binding all participants to what is stated in the application, assuring compliance with federal regulations, and stipulating that none of the participants will receive more than $35,000.

Joint projects are designed for those literacy efforts where success depends on the cooperation and participation of severallibrary systems. Joint projects have been used to coordinate literacy efforts between a city library and its adjacent county library system and to offer coordinated literacy services in a designated region of a state.

We do not fund many joint projects each year as they are more complicated applications to write and they require substantial justification. It is often difficult for library systems to put together a joint project due to its complex nature; the difficult and time consuming process of obtaining agreements from all involved libraries and their governing bodies; and local obstacles

such as geographic distances between the library systems or wide discrepancies in the level of literacy expertise at the libraries. Once underway, though, joint projects can be extremely worthwhile.

Applications for continued funding: There is no limit to the number of years a library can receive a grant under LSCA VI. Given the timing of our grant cycles, we realize that you are applying for your second grant just as your first project starts. In your second year application, tell what you plan to accomplish in the first grant and how the proposed grant will build on it. However, when applying to continue a project, you need to justify why you need continued federal support. Answer the question of why the local government or other agencies won't support a successful and necessary project. Explain your efforts to get support from other sources. Also, keep in mind that your application is like a new application. Although reviewers will have a list of previous grantees, they will be able to evaluate your application only on what you submit in this competition. They will not have access to any other information.

Conclusion

Grant applications should show a balance between good writing and a good project. A cleverly written application that does not have a sound project idea behind it will not be successful, but neither will an application that has great ideas but is poorly written. Reviewers and the Education Department need to have confidence that the project will be able to accomplish what it proposes, that the project is well organized, and that people have agreed to do what is in the application.

The success of the Library Literacy Program depends on the success of its projects. Barbara Humes and I are the program officers for LSCA VI. We will be glad to work with you as you prepare your applications and will provide whatever assistance or guidance we can. You are welcome to call us at anytime.

Carol Cameron Lyons *has been the Program Officer at the Office of Library Programs, U.S. Department of Education, since 1985. As a Program Officer, Ms. Lyons manages the Library Literacy Program, a $5 million competitive program that awards grants to libraries for the support of literacy projects. She plans and conducts the application review process, monitors and provides technical assistance to grant projects, and co-authors the annual publication,* **Library Literacy Program**, *with Barbara Humes*

Library Grants

The U.S. department of Education has a literacy grant program under Title VI of the Library Services Construction Act (LSCA) of 1986. The grant program is targeted to literacy services provided by local libraries. The grant program has a maximum award of $25,000 per institution. During the period between 1986 and 1990, Louisiana libraries received over $900,000 in literacy grant funding. However, during the 1990 funding cycle, Louisiana libraries were awarded over $300,000 in literacy grant funds. This placed Louisiana third in the nation for total LSCA grant funding for 1990, trailing behind only California and Texas.

From *Louisiana Literacy Resource Guide,*
Louisiana Office of Literacy, April, 1991

WORKPLACE LITERACY ROUNDTABLE: OPENING REMARKS

Governor Buddy Roemer
Governor of the State of Louisiana

I want to welcome everyone to our Workplace Literacy Roundtable. There are, on the panel, several expert commentators -- fellow travelers, people who are working with and on the problem, trying to address it as an opportunity for our country and for our state.

Let me begin by saying I am pleased that in the audience we have women and men who are professionals in the area, who are in business, and who work with business -- who work with children and adults on the whole question of literacy. There are elected officials in the audience, educated common decent citizens like myself, and you are all welcome.

Let me make a comment, if I could, and then get on to the meat of the program. It's a personal statement. I was lucky I grew up on a farm with four brothers and sisters, all about the same age as I, with lively discussions about America and the world. It was quite an education in itself. That was

> ***"It seems to me in a world where we have put a diminished premium on muscle and looks and a maximum premium on knowledge, while literacy was always important, it is now essential."***

prefaced by parents who did their very best to make sure we had the basic skills, and more. As a result of that foundation we have been able to enjoy an exceptional life. I am very thankful.

It's not my contention now, nor my belief now, that literacy, or however you define it, was the only factor in being able to enjoy a high quality life. Good health, good attitude -- there are many things. The truth is, as we approach the year 2000, that our workforce and our family workforce is tied directly to listen, to learn, to speak, to communicate! Let me put it another way. Someone who studies say, Thomas Jefferson -- if you think America is about freedom, there is no way to enjoy freedom without the power to make choices and inherent in the power to make proper choices

is knowledge. It seems to me in a world where we have put a diminished premium on muscle and looks and a maximum premium on knowledge, while literacy was always important, it is now essential.

In my experience as a public official I find it clearly to be true. I'll give you two examples. We've got a state which "enjoys" -- that's the wrong word -- an employment rate that is too high and an underemployment rate that is too high. Now it is my belief that there are not that many ditches to dig in the next decade and that mind power is more important than muscle power and also, as an American, there will always be a Singapore. There will always be a place to do it cheaper, whether that be forty cents an hour or ten cents an hour. Our men and women workers should not, cannot, will not work for those wages. If we are going to enjoy a high quality of living and high, decent wages, we have to know there will always be a place who will make it cheaper than us. Our substitute to the cheapness is quality productivity. Quality. We have to be smarter, more flexible and better trained. Literacy was important in the year 1960 when I went off to college. Now, in the year 1991 it is essential because there will always be a Singapore.

Second, the definition of literacy has changed in my lifetime. You know, when my granddaddy went to school the competition was in the classroom with you. When my mother went to school her competition was somewhere in town. When I went to school it was in Louisiana or in Alabama. When my son Dakota goes to school - fifth grade, East Baton Rouge Parish - his competition is somewhere between Frankfurt and Tokyo. The world has grown smaller. We must grow larger. Literacy is alive, it's essential, and it's changing.

That is what this panel will be about - the integration of our efforts to restore literacy by working with business, with government, in the workplace, and beyond - the issues of self esteem, values and knowledge. It's about a man being able to come home and read a note left by his wife or daughter about why they will be gone for two hours, or read a road sign, or read a ballot on election day. It's about the power to make choices. It's about what America is.

PLUS

James Duffy
Vice-President
Capital Cities/ABC, Inc.

The question asked of me was "Why did Project Literacy get involved in the workforce issue?" If you are not familiar with Project Literacy, it very simply is an alliance between two networks, the ABC Television Network and the Public Broadcasting service, our affiliate stations across the country, some 138 partner organizations dealing with education, and, now, 525 task forces, all working together to do something about the problem of literacy in our country and the weak basic skills the problem effects.

Our reason for the alliance is fairly simple. Through our experience in the past six years in dealing with the staggering problem of literacy, we have learned that, nationally, 23 million adult Americans 18 years and older cannot write or comprehend beyond the fourth grade level and another 30 to 35 million are at the eighth grade level. These statistics, which I'm sure you know fairly well from working with them the past couple of days, are astounding. As we traveled through the country putting literacy spots on the air, these statistics came home to us. We learned of the human tragedy involved, as I'm sure in so many cases is the truth, and the way the statistics affect the life of a single individual. As the Governor said, and as Pierce Quindell said, it's an economic imperative and, unless we do something about it, this country, as we approach the 21st Century, could well be less than a first class nation. We have to look to that because I really think that we can play a special role in bringing something special to the next century.

I believe that there is an attitude problem in this country. Not enough people really seriously believe what we have said. I was at a symposium in New York and I had the opportunity to talk with one of the nation's foremost economic advisors. I said, "What do you think about this whole competitive issue, the skills gap problem, the whole globalization of the marketplace, the growth at Thailand and in Malaysia? We are going to have a problem unless we do something with out people, aren't we?" He said, "Seriously, look at the unemployment rate. It's at a pretty good percentage right now and if we are successful in structuring our schools, it

will take care of the future. But, what's going to happen in those years in between?

Then, I was at a business meeting in New York and I asked one of the country's foremost arbitragers, a man with a pile of money. I won't mention his name, but I asked him the same question. He looked at me kind of blankly and said, "I really don't think too much about that. I really believe in the resources of the people and our businesses and what we can do when we put it together." But we have a gap.

The role I believe that communications and the media can play is that we can be a facilitator, a unifier, and a caller to action. We can bring people from diverse parts of our society to a common cause when we come to workforce literacy. We thought we could do that and bring the message out and illustrate, through our programming and through our PSAs, what is happening across our country and do what's needed.

A year ago this month, ABC, in partnership with a whole lot of organizations, including the National Alliance of Business, the American Association of Junior Colleges, and so forth, pulled together what we called the ***White Paper Live.*** This is what we use to bring some of the leaders of this country together to talk about this very issue we are talking about this morning. We got their input on what we could put on the air to demonstrate the problem in Monday through Friday programs for housewives, women, men, storylines, primetimes, documentaries, and so forth. That's what this whole workforce issue is all about. We are into the need for lifetime learning and we do have issues here that all of us have to be involved in. We are looking forward this fall to a documentary. The Governor talked to Peter Jennings he told me yesterday. We hope that Peter will narrate this documentary on the changing face of the workforce. We now have on the air actual case histories. They are thirty or sixty second units that will feature individuals who will tell what they have done to upgrade their basic skills to show people what they can do with their lives. This whole campaign on the air with PSAs is called **"You can do anything if you put your mind to it."** "Get involved" is the message.

The encouraging thing to me is that we have had an enormous response from the national campaign, we truly have. There were 750,000 calls to the Literacy Program nationally. What is so important now is that this is an international situation. But most of all, this is an imperative issue in the State of Louisiana and also in every state across this country. It is an issue in every community. The thing you can do to help is, if you are a business owner, then don't just say "What can I do?" Be sure to get in there and address your employees and your own skills, even if you just say, "Say, I'm

gonna see where I am." Because, folks, we are out of the agricultural society and the industrial revolution and we are now into the age of hi-tech. Flexibility and adaptability is what we need to change jobs, as the Governor said. In our lifetime we change jobs seven times. I just went through central Illinois. I grew up there on my grandfather's farm. The point is, this is Central Illinois Literacy Week. In each of these five or six communities I went through and talked to and saw some of the homefolk. Small company business owners, people in construction, major companies such as Kraft, AT&T and so forth, are doing something about the problem in local communities.

Partnerships are the single best answer we have -- whoever we are, wherever we are. Let's join hands and put in the middle of the table the very best we have to offer. Let's really get to the bottom of the issue and do something about it. We want to work with you in doing that.

Jim Duffy *has been integrally involved in Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS) since its inception in 1985. He is a vice-president with Capital Cities/ABC-TV, and former president of the ABC Television Network. PLUS has produced "one of the most extensive and aggressive public service campaigns in the history of broadcasting," according to* **Television/Radio Age** *magazine. He will be speaking at the Opening Session on Wednesday.*

HEELS OVER HEAD IN LOVE WITH LANGUAGE

Richard Lederer
Author and Lecturer

It wasn't long ago that my daughter Katy was scheduled to play in a jazz band in a concert at the local school. The jazz band was coming after the orchestra and then the regular bands. I, not wanting to sit around through the others and hear other parents' unidentifiable children squeezing unidentifiable sounds out of unidentifiable instruments, and I not knowing my brass from my oboe anyway decided to have some other folks take Katy down and they did. When I was about to leave the telephone rang with an inquiry from one of my public radio listeners in New Hampshire.

I get their calls frequently. I run separate newspaper columns in each of my newspaper outlets, and I'm telling you that whatever you hear about cultural illiteracy and the closing of the American mind, Ladies and Gentlemen, there has never been a more passionate minute in the history of the American love affair with language than right now. And doing what you all do, you would know better that than anyone in bookstores or in newspapers that to self-appointed grammar mavens like me this is a relatively new phenomenon in the history of this country. I think that people perceive that all about them things seem to fall apart; such as in concerns you may have heard of like education, the environment and the international situation. They really are concerned about preserving and enlarging the hallmark of their humanness and that is language. We know that human beings have always had language, because before we had it, we weren't human. The Dawn of Language is the Dawn of Humanity. The Dawn of Humanity is the birth of language and we are twins inextricably tied together through history.

So as I was saying, I get a lot of telephone calls like this, and this listener wanted to know my opinion of terminal prepositions. Should you use a preposition to end a sentence with, or was that something up with which you should not put? Well I explained that the terminal preposition was a bogus rule dreamed up by John Dryden in the 17th century who went so far as to redo all of his manuscripts to avoid the offending at the end. To paraphrase Shakespeare terminal prepositions are the stuff of which English sentences are made on. Anyway, I told the person some of the

most famous terminal prepositions, such as the one about the little boy up in his bedroom. His father comes up with the book about Australia and the little boy says "What for did you bring the book that I wanted to be read out of down under about for?" Also told him of the other one about the public schooler and the preppy who happened to end up sitting next to each other while on a plane. After an awkward silence the public schooler asks "What school are you at?" Well the preppy looks down his aquiline nose and says "Well, I happen to attend an institution at which we're taught to know better than to conclude a sentence with a preposition." The public schooler says "Oh, well alright, what school are you at dingbat?"

Anyway, after wondering if this examination would make me late I jumped into my automobile, sped down Main Street and took right turn at the red light. A policeman stopped me and was about to issue me a ticket for "failing to come to a complete stop." After I pointed out this obvious redundancy to him by asking just what a complete stop was anyway, I asked what exactly did I do. He said I did not come to a complete stop but merely to a partial stop. Oh I said, now an oxymoron! Then he recognized me as "that language guy on the radio" and let me off, thus saving me thirty-five dollars. But the English language is filled with oxymorons. Where else but in English is there such a thing as a complete stop? Or other gems such as jumbo shrimp, Amtrak schedule, non-working mother, airline food, and Internal Revenue Service.

We all try to use language as best we can. Intimidation through the use of "correct language" can be powerful and tempting. Is what I'm speaking from referred to as a lectern or a podium? The desire to use the correct word when applicable can be overwhelming. For example, when a zookeeper couldn't decide whether to order two mongooses or two mongeese, he merely ordered one mongoose, then asked that, while they were at it, to send him another mongoose also. The right answer is mongooses, by the way. Another example: is it nine and seven is or nine and seven are? Of course, the right answer is sixteen. But seriously speaking are is preferred, but is is alright.

Most people are upset by incorrect grammar usage. But true verbivores, true lovers of language sometimes want to punish language abusers and offenders - the splitters of infinitives and even those who dangle their participles in public. We should rather celebrate such things as being truly unique to the English language. Only in English can such wonderful oddities be found, and we should take pleasure in them. My next book will be entitled The Miracle of Language and cover the adaptations and creations of words and phrases which enrich our language. It will cover Shakespeare, who used over 23,000 words out of the estimated 50,000

which existed in his times. Of course he did make up 8.5 percent of them to pad those out a bit. The book will comprise subjects up to George Orwell who revolutionized our view of language in the political arena.

There will be three chapters about libraries in this book. The importance of libraries cannot be understated. There are those who believe that libraries should have public signs pointing to them such as hospitals. This serves as a reminder that libraries are as important to us as bandages and medicine.

In one section of the book there will be a section entitled "You Got Any Good Books Here?" which will list the odd or innocuously humorous questions asked at libraries. Questions such as: Do you have any books about people who get wiped out and mangled? Can I get a Social Security Card here? I need to find the Loch Ness monster, what do you have? I need an American classic - not long, but longer than 173 pages. Do you have a copy of The Canterbury Tales written in our language? These are a sample of the sort of odd questions which can crop in the library.

Perhaps the English language should more properly be called the Anglish language to remind us of its obscure Germanic roots. From its roots in Low Germanic and Anglo-Saxon (or Old English), it was a very minor tongue, never spoken by more than a few local groups, its name deriving from the Angles who were the most numerous of its speakers. In the Sixteenth century, there were about 50,000 words, spoken by about

> ***"The Dawn of Language is the Dawn of Humanity. The Dawn of Humanity is the birth of language and we are twins inextricably tied together through history."***

four to five million speakers altogether. Today there are over 615,000 words, but this is actually only the official word count. In reality, that number is only about one-third of the actual spoken language! Compare this to its closest competitors - German at 180,000 words and Russian at 150,000 words. French has a mere 100,000 words, yet its speakers desperately try to keep out such English-isms as Le week-end and Le fast food so as not to pad it out. The size of the Anglish language is huge, but only 30 % of the original wordstock is from the original language. With over 700,000,000 speakers, it is spoken in some form by one-fifth of the world in over 45 countries. About half of these are second language English speakers. It is truly becoming the closest thing we have to a global language.

Use of the English language is truly our talent. Just as the Germans generally excel in science and technology and the Italians and French prosper in style and fashions, English speakers tend to excel in the use of language. This is explained in and is the major theme of The Miracle of Language. This helps illustrate why English is the closest thing we have in terms of a global language. One-half of all books printed are in English, as are 50 % of phone calls, 60 % of all radio broadcasts and 70 % of all letters and telexes sent.

Yet in all this widespread and dominant usage, English is still a crazy language, an insane language. Where else but in English can expressions be so peculiar? In what other language can you ship by car and send cargo by ship; park in a driveway and drive in a parkway; or play at a recital and recite at a play? Where else but in English can your nose run and your feet smell? Or the second hand on a clock be the third hand? And how can a slim chance and a fat chance be the identical, or a good and a bad licking be equivalent, or shameful and shameless be the same? Why is there a difference between a wise man and a wise guy? I am always amused by the story of the foreign gentleman who innocuously said he liked Christmas, especially the story of "the three wise guys from the east side." In what other language can "What's coming off?" and "What's going on?" be the same? If vegetarians eat vegetables, what do humanitarians eat? If fire fighters fight fires, just what do freedom fighters fight? If pro is the opposite of con, just what is the opposite of progress? Let's not forget that you have to fill out a form to fill it in and filling in a form in means filling it out, that you add up a column of numbers by adding down, that your alarm clock can go off and on simultaneously, and you can be inoculated for and against a disease, and that you must chop down a tree to chop it up. We should analyze our language because it is deserving of a little study and observation just to spot its varied inconsistencies.

But it's in these gems of language that we discover the joy of English. In its complexity the most bizarre and contradictory expression result. But a reliance on the simplicity of language can be more than adequate, even preferred for maximum effectiveness. The use of one-syllable words can give sharpness to sentences, making their meanings succinct. The overwhelming majority of words used in everyday speech are single syllable. The first fifty-five most commonly used words are one syllable. Short, prosaic words are the most routinely used and therefore the most easily recognized. It is these words that we rely on for everyday survival, not lengthy ones. Every year I give my students a writing assignment with its only guideline being the sole use of one syllable words in the essay. The results are amazingly good, for it's in the use of these terse words we place most of our meanings and concepts. Their brevity hones their strength and

our familiarity with them strengthens their power. If you need to use a lengthy word to communicate your meaning, then do it. But if you want to use a short word to communicate a precise meaning, don't be intimidated by it. Don't be afraid to use shorter words and expressions when needed.

Dr. Richard Lederer *has published more than a thousand articles and books about language, including his bestselling* **Anguished English** *and* **Crazy English**. *He was elected International Punster of the year for 1989-90 and has been profiled in magazines as diverse as* **The New Yorker, People,** *and* **The National Enquirer.** *His weekly column,* **Looking at Language**, *appears in newspapers and magazines throughout the United States. He is the Grammar Grappler for* **Writer's Digest** *and language commentator on New York and New Hampshire Public Radio.*

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